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**CAISTER
ACADEMY**
*Creative
Education
Trust*

Tuesday 22 September 2020

Dear Parent

September Reopening – Update 3 and Caister Academy Site Development

I am delighted to be writing to you in my new role as Assistant Principal for Operations at Caister Academy. After two successful weeks back at school for students, I felt this was an appropriate time to update you on some areas related to my remit.

Sustenance

As part of their required equipment, students should be bringing water bottles to school. This is so they can stay hydrated throughout the day. We are not permitted to use water fountains at present, however, we have been able to provide drinking water dispensers in each of the dining areas. These can be used to fill water bottles at break and lunch.

You will be aware that we have been trialling a pre-ordering lunch system. This is to reduce food waste and queuing time and facilitate the use of different year group dining areas. This has worked well for hot food, however, students and parents have fed back that it would be helpful to purchase snacks without pre-ordering. Having installed cashless tills in our two additional dining areas, we are now able to facilitate this. Students will still pre-order hot meals but will also be able to purchase a range of snacks and drinks at break and lunch.

Thank you for your feedback regarding Parent Pay. We are working with our provider to develop their system, but if you require support, please do not hesitate to contact Miss Starkey, Finance Officer, at sian.starkey@caisteracademy.org.uk.

Finally, a reminder that if you think you may be eligible to apply for free school meals, please contact Mrs Barnes, Attendance Assistant, at amanda.barnes@caisteracademy.org.uk. She will be happy to support you through the application process.

Student Gates – Year 10

We are awaiting the instillation of a footpath from our South East entrance along the edge of our school field. This is to allow students to cross the field in less clement conditions.

Until this path is installed, to avoid students crossing the field in the muddy conditions expected later this week, we are going to trial Year 10 students entering the school via the main pedestrian gate. From tomorrow, Year 10 students should use the right-hand pavement of Windsor Road when approaching the school, as Year 9 students will continue to use the left-hand pavement, entering to the left of the main vehicle gate. All other year groups will continue to use their current gates.

As with all the measures we have implemented in line with government guidance, we will continue to review this plan on a regular basis.

Summer Development

As student numbers have grown, some of our departments had become split across the school. All departments have now been brought back together, providing ownership to the different areas of the school and allowing easier collaboration between teachers in the same subject.

These movements have included the refurbishment and redecoration of a large number of classrooms and corridors, and the development of a new art studio and music composition room within their respective areas. In line with our emphasis on the performing arts, plans for a new dance studio have been agreed and we are hoping this will be completed for use before Christmas.

In order to continue to provide outstanding teaching for our students using the latest technologies, we have upgraded our interactive resources across the school. This has included a substantial increase in the availability of Chromebooks for use during lessons and after school study, new interactive whiteboards in over half of our classrooms and upgraded Wi-Fi bandwidth to cope with the increased demand.

With regards to physical space, we have increased the capacity and flexible use of our Assembly Hall by removing the large area of fixed seating that was adjacent to the Dining Hall. This has significantly improved the learning environment for the practical subjects that use this space. And, although we are not currently running large events, this has provided us with greater capacity for future shows and performances.

Some of our students have noticed that the central playground and surrounding classrooms are much calmer. This is due to the removal of the old wind turbine which had become cost negative and due to its age, progressively more challenging to maintain and service. The money saved will be reinvested into new environmentally friendly initiatives and we will be looking to our Student Voice for ideas to guide this.

Finally, for social time, a new covered outdoor seating area has been designated for Year 11s and additional benching has been provided for the other year groups. Each year group has a designated study area for those who wish to continue studying at lunch or after school. In case of wet lunchtimes, each year group has also been designated a film room to be opened.

Future Developments

Finally, I am delighted to share that Creative Education Trust have recently appointed Walters & Cohen Architects to submit a master plan for the development of our buildings and grounds over the next five years.

This represents a significant investment into the long-term development of our academy and will ensure we provide students with a learning environment that reflects our core values of ambition, opportunity, character and community, both now and into the future.

Walters & Cohen were our chosen architects due to their personalised approach to the design process and due to their commitment to involve students and staff in the direction of the development. I look forward to sharing information with students on how they can become involved with this incredible project later this term.

Examples of our architects work can be found at www.waltersandcohen.com. We are excited to be working with such an experienced and innovative company, and I look forward to sharing further details of this master plan and how our students will benefit, later this year.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L King', written on a light-colored background.

Mrs L King
Assistant Principal for Operations