



**Where Pupils Achieve and Excel**  
Headteacher: Mrs T Price BA (Hons) MA Ed

TP/JP

12/07/2022

Dear Parents/Carers,

As the end of the school year is rapidly approaching I would like to provide you with an update in respect of the next few days.

### **School Events**

This week we will host our Awards Evening. The event starts at 7.00pm – invited pupils should arrive at 6.45pm in uniform. (minus blazers). Please make sure you have requested your tickets. On Friday it is the Y8 prom which starts at 7.00pm and finishes at 10.00pm. Please make sure pupils have purchased their tickets.

Leavers hoodies will be issued on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> July.

Next week is Health and Sports week. Pupils can come in sports kit all week – either their own sportswear or PE kit. Pupils will participate in fun sports day as well as a range of other activities throughout the week.

Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> July – The Bateman Bash. This is the reward for the pupils who have reached their reading target. The millionaires will get VIP access before being joined by the rest of the pupils in what promises to be a spectacular, fun filled event.

Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> July is our celebration afternoon. Y8 parents are invited to join us for a special leavers assembly where we will celebrate 4 years of the pupils' school career. Y8 Parents will be served refreshments before having a chance to view pupils work and collecting their reports. Parents of pupils in Y5, 6 and 7 are invited into school at 2.30pm to view work and collect reports. Parents will then be allowed to take pupils home when they leave. Unfortunately, only pupils whose parents attend will be able to leave early. This will enable us to ensure pupils safety.

Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> will be the final day of term with many pupils attending Alton Towers or Crocky Trail. Those not attending will do school- based activities.

## **School Uniform**

At this time of year many of you will be replacing uniform or in the case of Y8 may be thinking of disposing of it. If you have good quality uniform or PE kits that you no longer require we would very much welcome donations. We will then ensure it is passed on, free of charge, to families in need.

## **House System**

We are re-launching our house system in September. Each form will now all belong to one house – please see the table below. This will help us to facilitate inter-form house competitions and to create a form identity. There is no need for you to purchase new ties – this system will just roll out over the next three years. Some pupils however, have asked if they can swap ties with friends to reflect their new house. This is a parental decision and is left entirely up to you.

<b>Form Group</b>	<b>House</b>
5CM	Mars
5SLF	Neptune
5BR	Mercury
5TAH	Jupiter
6AF	Jupiter
6SR	Mars
6LJ	Mercury
6FC	Neptune

<b>Form Group</b>	<b>House</b>
7AD	Jupiter
7NJ	Mars
7CMO	Mercury
7SC	Neptune
8MC	Jupiter
8LH	Mercury
8LC	Mars
8LPE	Neptune

## **Arbor Information Management System**

You will also have received a separate letter informing you that we are changing our information management system from SIMS to Arbor. You will get a separate email once our system goes live in September. This will be to activate your account. The new parent portal will allow you to track behaviour and attendance data daily, pay for lunches and trips and access all letters and communication. It is a vital part of our commitment to improving communication with you so please sign up as soon as you receive it.

## **Pupil Groupings in KS3**

Currently in KS3 pupils have a mixture of set and class-based lessons (mixed ability). When we return in September this will broadly remain the same. In foundation subjects' pupils will be taught in form groups (mixed ability groups). All teaching in KS3 will continue to be delivered by specialist teaching staff.

For the core subjects of Maths, English and Science pupils will be taught in bands. Pupils are very familiar with this model in KS2. We have worked extensively over the last few years to ensure our standards continue to rise. One of the things we did was to move to mixed ability setting in Y5/Y6. This had a dramatic impact. Standards rose and we were above national in all key areas. Our most

recent Y6 data shows that we are in still in line or above national data which I feel is testament to the skills and hard work of staff and pupils.

The rationale for our change is that there is very little evidence to support that setting improves outcomes for pupils. We have done considerable research and spoke to pupils. Many of those in lower sets often felt stigmatised and pupils in higher sets reported feeling anxious and under pressure if they got moved down a set. Whilst an element of setting will remain, the pupils will be unaware as the groups will be called JBMS (James Bateman Middle School). When you have over 80% of the school working at expected standards or above there really isn't a bottom set and it is unfair to label them as such.

We are going to be monitoring this really closely and if we feel that standards slip or that our more academic pupils are stalling we will re-evaluate. I am going to be setting up a parent forum in the Autumn so that I can have regular parent clinics so that we can get feedback on this and other school issues. Please be assured that the achievement and well-being of our pupils is always at the fore when making any changes to the running of our school

### **Staffing Changes**

We have two members of staff leaving us at the end of this term. Mrs Davis one of our part time languages teacher is leaving to take up a full -time post and Mr Richardson one of our Teaching Assistants will be retiring. We wish them both all the best in their future pursuits.

We have some new members of staff joining us. Mrs Wood will be joining us as a Pastoral Manager and Mrs Mayer will join our team of Teaching Assistants. Miss Ecclestone will also start in September in preparation to cover Mrs Perkin's maternity leave. This will ensure consistency for all our pupils. They are all very much looking forward to joining the team and I am sure they will be welcomed by us all.

Finally, I would like to thank you for your support over the last 12 months. It has been yet another challenging year but together we have worked really hard to overcome them. I feel we have really finished the year on a positive. All pupils have had the opportunity to take part in residential visits and sports fixtures and educational visits are back on the calendar. Y6 did themselves proud and SATS results are in line or above national figures. Our recent Health and Safety Audit saw us achieve the highest grade possible. The reading target of 175,000,000 words which we set ourselves in September has been smashed but I can't say any more than that at the moment!

We have very clear plans to build on our successes when we return in September and very much hope you will continue to play a key role in the school's improvement.

Kind regards

Mrs T Price

Headteacher

