

14th July 2020

Dear Parent/Carers,

We hope you are all well at this difficult time, and thank you for all you have done to support home learning and the recent live lesson programme that is being delivered.

There are still so many uncertainties at the moment, and we continue to act on the guidance given by the government, working to implement this effectively into our school and community context. With this in mind, we want to share a change that we are excited to make for September with regards to our Vertical Mentoring Group (VMG) arrangements.

You will be aware that students have been supported in tutor groups that have had students from different year groups in, this has been done this way successfully for a number of years to allow for peer support and positive role modelling in all directions, alongside giving our students the opportunity to converse with young people of different ages. This is an approach taken by lots of schools in the country.

After the summer break, the academy will be moving away from our current Vertical Mentoring Group structure, to a horizontal structure. This is where all tutor groups will be made up of students from the same year group. Firstly, it is important to recognise that this was being trialled at one of the Academies prior to the COVID19 pandemic, and as such is not purely a reaction to the current situation. However, following the guidance issued on the 2nd of July 2020 we are currently planning for the likelihood of year group bubbles being the norm for a period of time following the summer break. A horizontal tutoring system is the only way to preserve the positive impact tutor time has, and the pastoral support that it offers the young people in our care.

There are many benefits to a horizontal tutor system, those that will support the current national picture are explained below.

- To support mental wellbeing, with targeted age appropriate resources, advice and guidance.
- A greater emphasis on year group messages and opportunities.
- An increased focus on age specific advice and guidance around key aspects of Academy life, social skills and concerns.
- An increased pastoral focus from tutors who can have a more defined roll given the consistent age of their tutees.

Outwood Grange Academies Trust, a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales with company number 06995649.

Registered office address: Potovens Lane, Outwood, Wakefield, West Yorkshire WF1 2PF.

VAT number: 158 2720 04. Outwood Grange Academies Trust is an exempt charity.

A list of Directors' names is open to inspection at our registered office.

- A more consistent offer of support around engagement in lessons, academic progress and attendance at school.
- An opportunity to use tutor time for focussed academic or pastoral intervention.
- To support Literacy and Numeracy development in line with age related expectations in these essential skills.

We are confident that this change of approach, whilst being required due to government guidance, will effect positive change for the students and Academy.

Please contact us via the enquiries@easingwold.outwood.com if you have any questions regarding this.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Tiffany', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Mr C Tiffany
Assistant Principal