



Chapelhouse Road
Chelmsley Wood
Birmingham
B37 5JS
United Kingdom
Telephone Number: 0121 329 4600
solihull@graceacademy.org.uk

14 December 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

Re: End of Autumn 2 Term and Start of January 2024

Writing these letters to you seems to come round quicker every year, and this time is no exception. It may possibly be down to how busy everyone has been at the academy as well as the amazing achievements and progress students have continued to make both in and out of the classroom.

The academy has been a buzz with student workshops, sports activities, open evenings and now Christmas events. We have had workshops for students around Building Healthy Relationships, Black History Month, Remembrance and Self Esteem Workshops which were delivered by external speakers as well as by our Academy Ethos Team. We've also had some Post 16 events which warrant special mention; our Sixth Formers assisted with our Post 16 Open Evening on 30 November where our current Year 11s spent an evening looking around facilities and speaking to teachers to find out more about our current and exciting new courses for 2023, as well as hearing about the variety of additional opportunities students can gain throughout our sixth form. Our Post 16 students also gave up their own time to assist with the organisation and running of the Community Christmas Meal on 07 December. This was our biggest one yet with over 100 guests, and both staff and students were thanked immensely by those that attended for a festive and well organised evening.

Other events that we've had onsite worth mentioning include our Parent/Carer Coffee Mornings, including our SEND and Year 7 focused ones. These continue to be popular both for the information they provide as well as the guest speakers that frequent them. Our next one will be near the end of January so look out for a reminder closer to the time. On 10 November, the academy took some time to remember those lost in conflicts past and current. This was the final observance in a two week long fundraiser, which also included a whole tutor session dedicated to Remembrance Sunday. This year's Poppy Appeal raised in excess of £200 for the Royal British Legion.

The Academy is pleased to share that we have been awarded the Bronze Award for supporting Young Carers in Schools. This is an acknowledgement jointly assessed and obtained from The Children's Society and Carer's Trust, which praises the work academy staff do to ensure those that fall into this category are not penalised for it when it comes to their learning and life chances. We are very proud of this award, but will not rest at this level of care, as we are now aiming to reach the Silver threshold to ensure we can further provide support to Young Carers in our school community. In line with academy awards, we have also been awarded Green in the Modeshift STARS Accreditation for efforts to increase levels of walking, cycling and other forms of sustainable transport for students in the academy. This was based on a Travel Plan that was submitted to the Local Authority. We were also nominated for Secondary School of the Year at the recent Education Today Awards. All of these accolades are a reflection of the support we have from parents and carers.

We are also very proud to announce that once again compositions from two Grace Academy Solihull students have been included in an Unsolved Anthology published by the Young Writers Association, which focuses on '*Tales of Danger*'. Well done to those that were selected; we have a copy of the anthology in the academy

Learn Centre.

As mentioned, we are acutely aware of the challenges that people are facing, so academically the support we offer is still outstanding and aimed at ensuring that your child achieves their potential. We are also focused on how we can support parents and carers, so in addition to the [parent/carer space on our website](#) which contains some excellent information, we have looked at practical solutions. Our food market is still available and continues to offer fresh food for parents and carers through Langar Aid Food Bank. We also have uniform items, both preloved and new, available that have been kindly donated by external organisations and members of our own school community. If you would like further information on these support types, please contact the academy via gas-communitylink@graceacademy.org.uk. Solihull Council also has a [website with advice and assistance](#) to help families in the local community.

For updates around online safety and latest information in relation to this, please visit our website where there is further detail and [support for students as well as for parents and carers](#). I would also ask again that you speak with your children about staying safe online. I ask that you are vigilant about the websites and media they are accessing and if you require any [guidance](#) around this, please again I urge you to check our website.

As you will have noticed, attendance at the academy has been a key focus throughout this year so far and will continue to be a top priority as we go forward. I again ask for your support in ensuring your child attends the academy whenever possible and to be reassured that if we feel they are not well enough to be here we will contact you.

I would like to please also ask all parents/carers to take the Christmas break as a time to review your child's [uniform](#). We take the high standards we have around uniform seriously as it reflects the values and culture we want to create for all our learners. As a reminder skirts should be knee length, trainers are not allowed in the academy nor are hoodies. With the onset of the colder weather, please remind your child to wear a warm coat to and from the academy. A full explanation of our uniform can be found on our website or please feel free to contact the head of year for your child if you require clarification.

Finally, with regards to the Christmas break, please note that we will be closing for this term at **12:00 on Friday 22 December 2023**, to allow for essential maintenance work to begin over the break. All students will return on **Monday 8 January 2024 from 8.20 am** for normal lessons.

I hope that everyone has a peaceful and safe Christmas with family and loved ones and that once again our hopes for a better new year become a reality.

Yours sincerely



Mr Darren Gelder
Executive Principal
For and on behalf of Tove Learning Trust