



4 September 2015

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope that you have enjoyed a restful break. We are delighted to welcome your children back to what we know will be another successful year for all members of the Marriotts' family. We are thrilled with our exam results and improvements and you can read more about these in the newsletter later this term and on our website.

At the start of term I just wanted to inform you of a few changes and share a few reminders.

### **Attendance**

Good attendance to school is vital to ensure students are making the required progress in order for them to achieve their full potential. Our exams analysis has again reflected this national statistic this year. The government have issued new percentage guidelines on how schools should judge if a student is persistently absent from school. Students whose attendance dips below 90% will now fall into this category which will trigger earlier intervention and, in some cases, fines and court action all supported by the local authority. For good attainment the government and statistics state that attendance must be above 95%. This includes authorised absence.

To ensure we are supporting your child to attend school punctually every day, we have expanded our intervention team who will track any absence if it occurs and this also allows for more contact time when your child returns to school.

We will continue to operate our policy which does not authorise any holidays to be taken in term time. If you have booked or are planning to book a term time holiday, please send a letter into school addressed to Mrs Collins, Assistant Head - Behaviour, Safety and Attendance. You will then be invited in for a meeting with Mrs Collins and Ms Honnor to discuss this.

We again advise that all medical and dental appointments should be made outside of the school day. If this is unavoidable, students should attend school prior to their appointment with a note and return when their appointment is over.

### **Punctuality**

School starts at 8.30am; however we strongly advise that all students arrive in school by 8.25am to ensure they arrive at their form rooms or assembly punctually to avoid missing key messages and activities. Students who arrive late to school will be required to complete an explanation form at the end of the school day. A member of the Behaviour for Learning team will then decide if they need to catch up on missed learning activities. This will be for a maximum of one hour depending on severity and frequency of lateness.

### **Behaviour**

Behaviour in our school is good as stated in our recent Ofsted report "*Inspectors saw no disruptive behaviour in class or at social times around the school.*" We have strong routines and high expectations in place for all of our students which are underpinned by the school's ethos: Aim High, Work Hard, Be Kind.

At the start of term all students have had an induction with their Form Tutor, supported by Year Leader, to familiarise them with how we will continue to work together to further improve our school by following 'the Marriotts' Way'. Included in their induction was our 'Respect, Attitude, Ownership' agenda and the introduction of the 10 Pledges which all students have signed and will have a copy of in their planners.

Our behaviour systems remain the same as last academic year; however there have been some slight adjustments to the outcomes for students who occasionally need some re-tracking and support.



Whole school detentions will still be completed on the same day, however these will now run for 60 minutes replacing the thirty minutes set last academic year. Failure to attend a detention will result in one day in the Refection Room the following day. This will be communicated to you by a member of the Behaviour for Learning Team; usually your child's Year Leader. We are sure that for the majority of students such sanctions will be unnecessary. Thank you for continuing to support our same day detention which as you know schools have the legal right to enforce.

There is an escalation strategy which will be considered where we see behaviour which requires additional support. This is available to view on our website.

### **Assessment**

Nationally the way schools assess the level of students is changing. Nationally Key Stage 2 and 3 National Curriculum Levels have been removed and instead we are replacing them with GCSE grades or equivalents; so this will now run from Year 7 through to Year 11 which will make it easier for students to understand their learning journey across all their years. Coupled with this GCSE Grades are being phased out nationally and this is being replaced by GCSE numbers 1-9. The Department for Education has decided to stagger this change across year groups and subjects; so in some subjects students might achieve a GCSE Grade (e.g B) whereas, in another subject they would be awarded a GCSE Number (e.g. 6). This will be carefully explained to students over the coming weeks, and will be explained in full in the upcoming Tutor Information, Advice and Guidance Evenings for parents and carers. (See dates at the end of this letter.)

### **Uniform Expectations**

I know there have been numerous issues with our uniform suppliers not being able to deliver all the new uniform orders, and can only apologise for the difficulties this has caused. However, it was so nice to see so many of our students wearing the new school uniform and looking very smart. I would just like to remind you of the expectations of the new uniform and the phasing of this over the next 2 years.

- Blazer, shirt and tie and new grey jumper with red trim is compulsory for all Year 7 students – however, the jumper is optional.
- Shirt/Blouse and tie is compulsory for all Year 8–11 students. The shirt/blouse must be tucked in, the top button done up and the tie worn up to the button and down to the waist.
- Blazer is compulsory for all students from September 2016.
- The old style cardigans and jumpers with school logo are still acceptable for Year 8–11 students until September 2018.
- The old style polo shirts are **not** acceptable.
- Black shoes (no trainers, canvas pumps etc).

There is no change to the requirement for black trousers or skirts, which should be knee length and no stretchy fabric, or black school shoes. Only the blazer, jumper and tie have to be purchased from SWI, our uniform supplier, along with the PE kit. If you have been unable to get the uniform in time for the start of term, it will be acceptable for students to wear the white shirt without the tie until your order arrives.

I attach to the end of this letter an extract from SWI regarding the current issues relating to our school uniform.

### **Homework and Marking**

Homework is an integral part of developing the learning of our students. To support this we use an online homework system – Show My Homework, which can be accessed via desktop, mobile and tablet devices. Homework is set weekly and will include a range of activities and mini projects. Students are responsible for writing homework up and accessing the site.

Teachers will mark and assess students' work using a combination of written and verbal feedback at regular points in each term and will use peer and self-assessment to develop student independence and promote independent learning.



## Open Evening

We wish to involve a significant number of students in various activities as part of the School's Open Evening on Thursday 17 September. The evening is held for parents of children who are transferring at the start of the next academic year (i.e. September 2016). To give a clear picture of the excellent education offered at Marriotts it is important that a large number of current students help as guides, taking visitors around the school and answering their questions. Our students are our best ambassadors.

As this will be a very tiring evening and to enable preparations to be made, school will close early on Thursday 17 September. Students can leave at 1.20pm but lunch will be available for those who wish to stay. Students who are unable to go home will be supervised in school until 3.00pm. Normal lessons will take place during periods 1-4.

Many students will take part in Open Evening, which will involve a late evening (particularly for the younger students). School will not start on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> September until 10.55am. Students will have break before being registered at the start of lesson 3.

Letters for student volunteers will be sent out next week. Please encourage friends and families to visit our fantastic school

## Key Dates

### Autumn Term 1

Monday 7 September – Normal school day

Thursday 17 September – Open Evening – students leave at 1.20pm

Friday 18 September – school starts at 10.55am

### Information and Guidance Evenings:

It is essential that parents and students attend these events to understand the new education system. Please put the dates in your diaries.

Monday 21 September – Year 7

Tuesday 22 September – Year 8

Wednesday 23 September – Years 9 and 12

Thursday 24 September – Year 10

Thursday 1 October – Year 11

Friday 23 October – Last day of Autumn term – normal school day

Monday 26 to Friday 30 October – Half Term

### Autumn Term 2

Monday 2 November – First day of Autumn Term 2

Tuesday 3 November – Inset Day 2 – school closed to students

Friday 4 December – Occasional Day – school closed to students

Friday 18 December – Last day of Autumn Term 2 – finishing time to be advised.

Finally can I reiterate how glad we are to have you as part of the Marriotts family.

Let's have a fantastic year and continue together to: Aim high. Work hard. Be kind.

Yours sincerely

Beth Honnor  
Headteacher



## Message from Sportswear International

"Please accept our sincerest apologies if you haven't received all or some of your ordered items.

As part of our continued growth in the school wear market it became critical for us to upgrade our old IT software due to its age and stability. With this in mind we embarked on a significant IT software investment just over two years ago and in February this year we went live on a new company wide software programme. We believe it can support and significantly enhance our business and service levels to you for many years to come. The software has already given our operation many benefits. However it has also presented us with some unforeseen challenges.

Regrettably this has affected some customers sales orders placed during July and early August. The issue was related mainly to Web orders being put on hold while system dates were calculated for delivery. Unknown to us this job was only partially completing which led to random customer orders not being processed correctly in our main system. It also miscommunicated some dates for delivery well into the future which was confusing and worrying to our customers.

Our IT Department have invested a significant amount of time and effort to resolve and release these orders, however due to the extreme seasonality of customer orders and an unprecedented increase in order volumes it has meant that we have been unable to maintain our standard delivery times.

The knock on effect has been a significant increase in communication from customers via phone email and social media. This has led to delayed communication and some customers not being able to make contact with us in a timely fashion. Even though we invested in a doubling of available phone lines and new communication software as well as extra customer service personnel the increase in queries has meant that the phone lines at times are full and customers may be getting an engaged signal rather than joining our queue system. We recognise and fully appreciate that not being able to speak to someone about an issue is infuriating and time consuming and for this we apologise.

At this moment we already have or are in the process of updating all schools which have students that may be affected by this delay.

We understand this won't confirm when your order will be dispatched but at this juncture we can assure you that we are doing all we can to get your outstanding items to you as soon as possible.

Once again we are extremely sorry about any anxiety this is causing and we assure you that we are working hard to resolve the situation."