

5 September 2024



Smestow Academy
www.smestowacademy.co.uk

Dear Parent/Carer

Welcome back!

I hope this letter finds you well and that you have had a restful and enjoyable summer. As we embark on another academic year, I am delighted to share some wonderful news that highlights the incredible achievements of our pupils and the exceptional efforts of our dedicated staff.

This summer, we received the results of the GCSE exams, and I am thrilled to announce that our Year 11 pupils surpassed expectations with outstanding results. Headline figures showed significant improvements on every headline measure but most notably on the most important measure of pupil progress where our Progress 8 score went from -0.35 (which represents pupils being one third of a grade below peers with the same ability across all subjects nationally) in 2023 to an initial score of +0.26 (meaning pupils are on average one quarter of a grade above their peers nationally for 2024; figure subject to validation). This significant increase puts us as one of the most improved schools across the whole country and is a perfect example of 'Success achieved together'!

The hard work, perseverance, and commitment of pupils and staff have truly paid off, and the impressive outcomes are a testament to the high standards of education and support that we strive to provide here at Smestow following the rapid improvement since Matrix Academy trust took over in January 2023.

Attendance

In addition to our academic successes, I am also excited to share a significant achievement in our school community: a magnificent increase in overall attendance by 3.5% last academic year when compared to 2022-23. This remarkable improvement reflects not only the growing enthusiasm of our pupils but also the strong partnership between our school and families. Higher attendance rates are closely linked to better academic outcomes and personal growth, and this increase is a clear indication of our collective commitment to ensuring that pupils are engaged and supported in their learning journey

I should also share that a new National Framework has been introduced from 19th August 2024 for Fixed Penalty Notices for your child's school attendance. An information leaflet can be found by following the link below:

<https://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-07/Leave%20of%20Absence%20Leaflet%20-%20Jul24.pdf>

This framework contains a national threshold for increasing the scope for fixed penalty notices where 10 sessions (or 5 school days) of unauthorised attendance in a 10 week period can result in fixed penalties for families of poorly attending children.



Smestow Academy
Windmill Crescent
Castlecroft
Wolverhampton
WV3 8HU
West Midlands



Matrix
Academy Trust
EDUCATION WITHOUT EXCEPTION

01902 539500



Smestow Academy



smestowacademy



Cashless Catering & Parent/Carer Communication

From September 2023, Smestow Academy went “cashless” with all payments being made on our new Matrix Academy Trust App which can be downloaded on your mobile device app store. This is where you will make payment for your child’s catering and any additional trips you wish for them to attend.

Please note, your child will not be able to purchase anything in the school with cash. **If you do not plan on making payments, please still download the app as this will contain day to day information for you from school.**

ClassCharts/New rewards System

From the start of this academic year, we will be launching the pupil ClassChart App with our pupils encouraging them to log on and access a variety of rewards ranging from stationary to paid activities like the inflatable assault course we had at the end of last academic year.

Pupils will be given their own personalised code to download the app and log in. They will be able to use their positive points to purchase rewards depending on the amount of positive points they have. Pupil's negative points will take away from their spendable ClassChart points. For example, if your child has 100 positive points but 25 negative points they will only have 75 spendable points to use on our rewards.

Throughout the academic year pupils will have opportunities to gain positive house points for their work in lessons, contributions outside of the classroom, attendance and many more.

This is also a reminder for you as parents to download the ClassCharts App to access the daily events of your child in school. If you do not have the code to log into your children account or if you have any difficulties downloading either ClassCharts or Matrix Academy App, please email Postbox@smestowacademy.co.uk

Uniform

Thank you to all of our parents who supported with ensuring pupils returned to school in the correct uniform to start this academic year. A reminder for some that our uniform consists of:

- Black blazer
- White school shirt
- School tie in house colours (minimum of 6 stripes to be visible)
- Black 'V' neck long sleeve jumper (optional)
- Black tailored trousers or black formal skirt (appropriate length) - no lycra skirts permitted
- Black socks or tights (not patterned)
- Plain black leather shoes
- Small stud earrings to be worn in the lower lobe
- No facial piercings, nail varnish, false lashes or false nails
- Natural hair colour only

Students in Sixth form should wear full business dress and are reminded that tight fitting clothing is not appropriate. Nose studs are also not allowed in school and students will be asked to remove them.

More detail for clarity on the expected standard of uniform (including appropriate skirts and appropriate footwear) can be found at <https://smestowacademy.co.uk/uniform/>



Dates for Your Diary

- Thursday 3 October 2024 - Year 7 Settling in Evening
- Thursday 3 October 2024 – Year 11 Help your Child Revise Evening
- Thursday 21 November 2024 – Sixth Form Open Evening
- Thursday 12 November 2024– Year 11 Parents Evening
- Thursday 16 January 2025 – Sixth Form Parents Evening
- Thursday 6 February 2025 – Year 10 Parents Evening
- Thursday 6 March 2025 – Year 9 Parents and Options Evening
- Thursday 15 May 2025 – Year 8 Parents Evening
- Thursday 19 June 2025 – Year 7 Parents Evening

Training Days

- Friday 25 October 2024 – School Closed, Staff Training Day
- Friday 20 December 2024 – School Closed, Staff Training Day
- Monday 6 January 2025 – School Closed, Staff Training Day
- Friday 11 April 2025 – School Closed, Staff Training Day
- Monday 21 July 2025 – School Closed, Staff Training Day

Early Closures

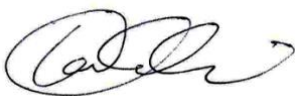
- Thursday 26 September 2024 – 12:30pm finish for Open Evening
- Thursday 5 December 2024 – 12:30pm finish for Staff Moderation Training
- Wednesday 2 April 2025 – 12:30pm finish for Staff Moderation Training

As we look forward to the new school year, we are excited to build on this success and continue our journey of excellence. We have an exciting and enriching curriculum planned, with a range of new opportunities and initiatives designed to inspire and challenge our pupils.

As we begin this new academic year, I encourage everyone to embrace the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead with enthusiasm and determination. Let us work together to make this year a memorable and successful one for all.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership. I look forward to seeing you all soon and wish you a fantastic start to the school year.

Yours sincerely



Mr I Chamberlain
Headteacher



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