



Friday 29th September 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

Re: Information for parents/carers – The start to term and key information

I write to you as we reach the end of our fourth week back into the new academic school year where we have welcomed back our pupils to school after the summer break. This has included welcoming thirteen new pupils to the school for the first time. We have also begun teaching our first ever Year 10 students who have started studying for their GCSE examinations.

Pupils have met myself and other members of the senior leadership team and those members of teaching, support and administrative staff who have joined Northumberland PRU this September as we continue to grow as a school. This is reflected by our school culture of the 4 R's: Respect, Responsibility, Resilience and Rewards which all staff and pupils are aware of and are expected to follow when in school.

New PRU student uniform

I would like to begin by extending my thanks for your continued support for myself, staff and the PRU as our pupils have arrived in a high standard of school uniform for school so far. This week we have provided every student with two black PRU branded polo shirts and a black PRU branded hooded top. These are free of charge and paid for by the PRU in order to support our families in challenging times. We have provided information and supported students this week in launching our new uniform and every student is now expected to arrive at school on **Monday 2nd October** next week wearing their new items of clothing.

Where there may be some slight issues with any student not attending in uniform, we will work supportively with families to ensure that this is addressed together in partnership so that everyone attends in full uniform and fully meets our expectations regarding student appearance.

I would particularly like to highlight how well our new students in Years 9 and 10 have made the transition into school and overall we are very pleased with the attitude and effort which students in all year groups have demonstrated so far. We have worked with and are grateful of the support of parents/carers where some students have needed additional help to follow our systems and routines or meet our expectations.

We have continued to address all aspects of the school over the summer in our drive for improvement as well as making some key changes to attendance, behaviour, and teaching & learning in order to meet the recommendations made to us by OFSTED at our last inspection in March 2020.

Attendance and Punctuality

A number of our year groups so far this term have met or have been near to meeting the school attendance expectation for every pupil of 96% or higher. It is essential that students attend school every day in order to address the lost learning generated from school closures caused by national lockdowns over recent years.

Quality First Teaching & Learning

Pupils have been receiving key information about our approaches to teaching and learning in lessons, as well as how work is expected to be presented in books. A priority has been to inform students about how staff will provide feedback on their work and how they will be informed about target grades, current progress and how they can further improve. We have also further developed Forest School and have introduced RE, Product Design and IT to our Key Stage 3 curriculum this term.

This year in school we are again prioritising the importance of reading widely and often along with increasing the teaching of literacy and phonics skills upon pupils' return to school. Literacy and reading will continue to be given increased time and priority within morning registration period, balanced with a robust and effective personal development and careers curriculum to help inform students and support mental health and well-being.

Behaviour for Learning

Here at Northumberland PRU we aim to provide a safe, caring, well-ordered environment, which is vital to effective teaching and learning.

Our approach towards behavior and attitudes to learning requires the commitment and consistency of practice of all staff to ensure that pupils know the standards expected of them. All members of the school are expected to help maintain an atmosphere conducive to learning, with courtesy and mutual respect as basic requirements. Pupils will be treated consistently.

Our approach towards behaviour is not exhaustive and underpins the school rules:

- Be Prepared
- Follow Instructions
- Look the Part

Aims

- Promote British values
- Support effective teaching and learning
- Foster mutual respect
- Prepare learners for the adult world
- Create consistency of expectations and consequences
- Challenge poor behaviour in an appropriate manner
- Keep staff and students safe
- Create calm corridors and purposeful classrooms

Positive behaviour and attitudes towards learning will be widely celebrated and remarked upon via spoken word, postcards issued home and our new pupil rewards scheme. Everyone at Northumberland PRU continues to follow our 'Behaviour for Learning' ladder system which makes it very clear how pupils will be rewarded for showing positive attitudes toward learning and good conduct, as well as how sanctions will be applied and how pupils will be supported when these expectations are not met. Details of this can be found on our school website.

Forms of unacceptable behaviour will be met with an appropriate sanction (e.g. verbal reprimand or 'call back' break or lunch detention. Parents and carers will be informed if their child has received a behaviour 'call back' through our regular telephone calls home made by the form tutor or support assistant.

Communication home from school

I hope that the recent refresh of our Northumberland PRU website at the start of term now makes gaining key information about school and events easier to navigate.

This year we will be continuing our face-to-face Parent/Carer Evenings. Further information will be released nearer the end of the first half-term.

Once again, I would like to thank you all for your understanding and support and I look forward to working in partnership with you as we move through the school year, sharing the successes and achievements of our students.

Yours sincerely

R. L. Carr

Richard Carr
Headteacher