



November 6th 2018

Dear Parents and Carers,

November Update

I hope you have all enjoyed a positive half term break. We had an incredibly busy first half term here at Colmers, the longest of the academic year. I have thoroughly enjoyed getting to know our students and staff over the eight weeks and have been delighted to meet so many of you at our Meet the Tutors event and our Year 11 Parents' Evening. One of the challenges students face in any school is adapting to change, especially a change of Headteacher. I am very grateful to have been so warmly welcomed into the Colmers family where the commitment to Belonging Together is such a strong feature of our community.

We are grateful for your continued support as we enter the second half of the Autumn term prepared for seven weeks of intensive hard work to ensure every single one of our students is making great progress. By Christmas, we will have completed 40% of the Academic year. Attendance in school continues to be a major priority especially as Winter approaches, so please do contact us if you need any support with your child's attendance.

Our Season 1 ends this week, with all students engaged in assessments of their learning and progress to date. You will see that we have updated our reports when these are issued later this half term. Students will receive grades for Achieving Excellence, Belonging Together and Challenging Mindsets as well as feedback on their academic progress. These grades will contribute to a new-look student scorecard and every student's achievements will contribute to House Points in what we hope will be an exciting competition this year!

High standards of uniform are a symbol of achieving excellence here at Colmers. As Winter approaches, it is important that all of our students keep warm and dry on the way to and from school. I would appreciate your support maintaining our uniform code of black, blue or grey coats and black school shoes. Please contact your child's Head of Year if this causes any concerns.

I have had some helpful feedback from parents and staff about the changes we have made to the detentions system this year. We have simplified our rules for all students to ensure that every young person is:

- Ready to Learn
- Respectful
- Safe

While these rules are helping everyone to understand what is needed for our community to maintain high standards, there have been some concerns that reasons for detentions are not always clear. Our staff team is continuing to work on how we communicate detentions to students so that there is no confusion and we continue to insist on the highest standards of behaviour for learning across the school.

On a hugely positive note, I am delighted to recognise the achievements of one third of our students in years 7-11, 344 young people in total, who achieved excellence by completing the half term without a single detention.

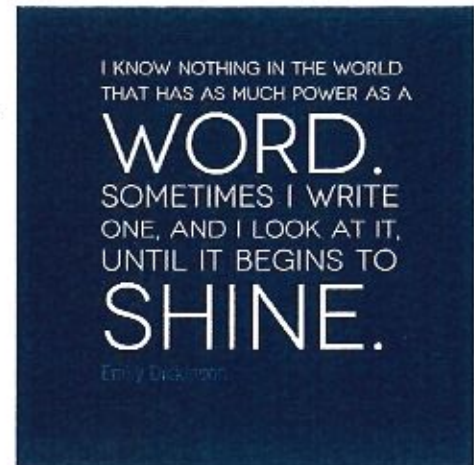
Parent Governor Appointments

We were delighted to receive two applications for Parent Governor vacancies on our Governing Body and we are excited to welcome both Katie Tombs and Dean Taylor-Bryant to our Governing Body this month.



Achieving Excellence : The Power of Words

This half term we will be working across the school on developing the academic vocabulary of our students to ensure they are fully prepared for the demands of GCSEs. Under the new exam specifications, there is increased demand on students to use technical vocabulary in every subject. We want to support our young people to acquire new words, use them well and most importantly, to develop a love of language. Over the course of the next 12 school weeks, we will be introducing 5 academic words a week and encouraging our students to use these in different contexts. The words have been carefully chosen as the core vocabulary that our students need to be able to recognise, understand and use in order to succeed across the range of GCSE subjects. Each subject area will also be helping students develop specialist vocabulary. Do please ask your child to talk to you about new words they are learning and encourage them to incorporate this vocabulary as part of their journey to success.



Belonging Together: Online and Text Communication



We sent information to you last half term about the introduction of the Sims App to improve our electronic communication with parents. Attached to this letter is an overview that sets out the different ways we can communicate with you; at present, we have just 15% of parents signed up to the Sims App and we would love that figure to increase. You can download the App from your App store and we can re-send details to you via email to activate your access to the range of information available.

Next week we will be gathering data for the Autumn Season reports and you will be able to view your child's report electronically through this App so please do contact school reception on 0121 453 1778 if you need any assistance with access to the App.

If you do not regularly receive text messages or email communication from school, it may be that we do not hold the correct mobile number or email address. Please do contact Reception on 0121 453 1778 if you think we may need to update your contact details as this regular communication with you really is essential to how we stay in touch with parents and carers on a daily basis. We will also run a data checking process for all families during the next half term. This can also be completed with the Parent App rather than on paper, another great reason to download the app.



Challenging Mindsets: Making the Most of Every Opportunity



This first half term has seen students from years 7 through to 13 making the most of incredible opportunities available through our curriculum and enrichment offers. Years 7 to 9 have been engaged in a whole host of interesting and varied enrichment activities within their timetables and you can see some of the tremendous results on our Facebook page and our website, www.colmers.bham.sch.

95 of our year 10 students completed the first stage of their Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award

this half term – a truly amazing achievement. Having spent a Saturday learning about map-reading and navigation, they then split into two groups, spending two days trekking with all of their tents and camping equipment guided by our wonderful staff team. This kind of experience really is a magical opportunity for our young people to develop their resilience and team-work skills, which we know will serve them incredibly well on their journey to GCSEs and beyond.



Our Year 12 and 13 students have made a great start to the year and we are looking forward to sharing with students in Years 10 and 11 the opportunities to continue studying here post-16 when we hold our Sixth Form Open Evening on Thursday November 15th. We are fiercely proud of the pathways that we offer our students to progress through A'levels and on to university or high quality vocational alternatives. Whatever year group your child is in, you are most welcome to come along to the open evening to find out more – it is never too early to start planning your child's ambitious pathway to success!

With best wishes and thanks in anticipation of your continued support,

Emma Leaman

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Headteacher

Dates for your Diaries:

Thursday 15th November

w/c November 19th

Thursday 22nd November

Friday December 7th

Friday 21st December

Sixth Form Open Evening

Autumn Season Progress Reports issued

Presentation Evening

INSET Day – school closed to students

Last day of Autumn Term



ParentMail



Use the Colmers Parent Mail App to:

- Report absences
 - Receive updates and newsletters
 - Receive messages & alerts from the school
 - Easily pay for items using your preferred payment method
 - Top-up your child's dinner money online & see their lunch purchases
 - Complete forms & surveys
 - Apply for Free School Meals
 - Book appointments at Parent & Carer evenings
- Search App Stores for "Colmers Parent Mail"



The School Website

www.colmers.bham.sch.uk

Use the website to:

- See our newsletters
- View our prospectus, policies & procedures
- View standards & results information & other key information for Parents and Carers

Sims Parent App



Use the Sims Parent App to:

- Monitor your child's attendance, achievement, and behaviour
 - Update your contact details and amend data collection
 - View school reports in app or from the Sims Parent Website
- Search for "Sims Parent"



How we communicate with Parents & Carers at Colmers School



If you are unsure of anything we always encourage Parents & Carers to get in touch

t: 0121 453 1778

e: enquiries@colmers.school



Twitter [@ColmersSchool](https://twitter.com/ColmersSchool)
 Instagram [colmersschool](https://www.instagram.com/colmersschool)
 Facebook [Colmers.School](https://www.facebook.com/Colmers.School)

For the latest announcements & daily updates on school life

ACHIEVING
excellence
 BELONGING
together
 CHALLENGING
mind-sets