

Monday 29th October 2018

Dear Parent and Families,

RE: Rye College Improvement Update – Term 1 (October 2018)

I write to you with an update about the progress we have made over the first term.

I'm pleased to say that after the summer break, we returned in buoyant mood with a real sense of positivity about the place – attendance and punctuality are both on the rise. Whilst we will shortly be publishing a 'parent-friendly' version of our improvement plan on our website, here are a few highlights of progress to date:

Prior to our return a rigorous review of planning was undertaken by senior leaders. As a result students will be experiencing new courses and resources in a number of subjects including Mathematics and French. All our courses now prepare students for the GCSE qualifications they may student with us.

The Maths team are currently receiving training through our partnership with Beacon Academy to improve the quality of delivery and introduce greater stretch and challenge in lessons. Students should now be getting regular focused 'feed-forward' on how to correct their misconceptions.

We have been keen to build on our work last year to improve the quality and regularity of feedback. Students now receive a variety of feedback on a three week cycle in most subjects. Some feedback may relate to specific activities that need follow-up through new resources such as 'Hegarty Maths'.

Leaders are undertaking regular walks around the college to see learning on a daily basis. We are taking steps to make our classes more inclusive and dyslexia friendly with the use of appropriate fonts for PowerPoint resources and accessibility to coloured reading rulers for instance. As data is being collected leaders continue to meet regularly to identify students who may be falling behind so their class teachers can take action to ensure they quickly catch-up.

Moreover, we are now members of an "Achievement for All" programme that supports school leaders in ensuring Pupil Premium is used most effectively to minimise the achievement gap between those students in receipt of the premium and those that are not. This national scheme has had considerable success ensuring the ring-fenced funding stream has maximum impact where it matters most – in the classroom.

The college is working with the Sabden Multi Academy Trust to deliver training to teachers on behaviour management, de-escalation and classroom expectations. With greater consistency and less variation between classrooms, students are clearer about our expectations and how to conduct themselves accordingly. Our new Student Leadership Team is also up and running tasked with strengthening student voice so youngsters can actively contribute to the growth of the college.

Finally, next term we look forward to launching our strategic partnership with Place2Be – the country's leading children's mental health charity. Our recent appointment of a school-based service manager will allow us to create a meaningful whole-school approach to mental health that will help our young people achieve their full potential and deal positively with the difficulties they face.

I hope this brief update gives you some insight into the progress we are making as a school. I would encourage you to come to one of our end of term 'Meet the Leadership' meetings to hear in person how we are moving forward.

Yours sincerely

Barry Blakelock
Executive Headteacher