

September 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to another exciting school year! I'd like to say a special welcome to the parents and carers who are joining the Elms Bank community for the first time this year, alongside those who have been with us for some time. I am sure that you have found the welcome that you and your child have received as warm as mine has been as the new Headteacher starting this September; this truly is a very special place. It has been fantastic to see our wonderful students returning to school this week with beaming smiles on their faces, enjoying getting back into the school routine. Our close partnership is vital, so I wanted to begin the year with some important messages.

Parent and Carer Welcome Morning

We would love to invite you in for a welcome morning to meet with the team and me. If you are able to join us, please come to school between **9.30** and **11.00** on **Thursday 3rd October** for refreshments and a chat with staff in the school Dining Room.

Communication

Our commitment is to ensure you are fully informed of your child's learning journey. Your child's form tutor is your first point of contact at school or college and will email you with an update each week. As you will appreciate, during the day they are working with students, so not always able to answer the phone. If you need to contact them, please send them an email. If you have an urgent concern, please phone the school or college office and the Reception team will be happy to help you and if needed ensure that you receive a call-back as soon as possible.

Absence Reporting

If your child cannot attend school for any reason, please phone the school or college office. If needed, leave a message and we will call you back. If your child will be absent for a planned medical appointment, please email their form tutor and include our attendance email address:

attendance@elmsbank.oaklp.co.uk

PE Kits


Please ensure that your child's PE kit is sent in on their PE day. All kit needs to be labelled with your child's name. Students should change into their PE kit in school and not come into school wearing it, unless this has been agreed in advance with their form tutor.

PTA

We would love parents and carers to join our Parent-Teacher Association. This is a really important way for the school to raise additional funds which benefit all our students, as well as ensuring we all work closely together. If you would like to know more, please come along to our Coffee Morning or email any enquiries to Mrs Dent: **dent.c@elmsbank.oaklp.co.uk**

Headteacher: Mrs Gemma Parkes

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Elms Bank
School & College

Excellence for All

Attendance

Regular school attendance is really important for children. We recognise that some of our students have medical needs which mean that they cannot always come to school, and of course, we will always work closely with you to provide support where this is the case. We are only permitted to authorise absence for our students for medical reasons, exceptional circumstances (such as attending a funeral), religious observance or because there is a problem with the School Transport service. **We are not permitted to authorise term-time holidays.** If children are absent for unauthorised reasons for more than 10 half-days or 5 full days over the year, legally the school and local authority are required to consider if a fine should be issued.

Please support your child's attendance at school by not booking holidays in term-time.

Social Media

We know that lots of our students have smartphones and access to social media. While social media can be a convenient way for young people to stay in touch with each other, we know that it also can cause harm if they use it excessively, view inappropriate content or are using it late at night and not getting enough sleep. Please be vigilant with your children's phone use and set screentime limits on devices, and if you wish to have extra peace of mind, consider using apps such as Qustodio or Ontario which allow you to monitor your child's use of social media.

Free School Meals

We encourage all our families to claim Free School Meals if your child is eligible for them. Children are entitled to free school meals if their parents/carers receive certain benefits. If your child does not currently receive Free School Meals and you think they qualify, please use this link for further information and to apply: <https://www.bury.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/school-meals/free-school-meals>

Pupil Premium Funding for Previously-looked After Children

If your child is adopted from care, or on a Special Guardianship Order or Child Arrangements Order following a period of at least one day in care, school can claim additional funding for them to provide additional resources. If you have not previously notified us that your child is previously looked-after, please speak to your child's form tutor in confidence so we can ensure that this information is known.

Important Dates

There are lots of events and activities happening this term, which are all on our calendar on our website. Please check it and save the dates – more information will follow nearer the time. The calendar is here: <https://www.elmsbank.co.uk/parents/term-dates/>

We are really looking forward to working with you and your child this term and seeing the wonderful progress they will make. As always, please contact us if you have any questions or worries at all.

With kind regards,

Gemma Parkes
Headteacher

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