



23rd November 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

Re: 'How different we all are' (November 2021)

This month I have been meeting with other Headteachers in Coventry and Warwickshire; something that has not been so easy to do over the past 20 months. We visited each other's schools, met with staff and discussed the direction each of our schools is facing. What struck me was how similar the challenges are that we all face in our schools. Issues such as supporting students' mental health, the need to promote staff wellbeing, tackling social media concerns such as the recent TikTok phase and ensuring students get reacquainted with following the routines of the day - all universal challenges in schools currently.

Whilst those similarities can bring great comfort, it was also interesting to see how differently schools discharge the job of education. We all operate in our own unique contexts with our own set of priorities and community foci. Yet, ultimately we are all aiming for the same thing; to equip students for life.

Since I last wrote, we have or will be celebrating a whole range of religious festivals such as All Saints Day, Diwali, the birthday of Guru Nanak, Hanukah and St Andrew's Day to name a few. Events such as Hallowe'en, Bonfire Night, Remembrance Day, trans awareness week, Children in Need and the annual delight of Strictly Come Dancing also bring groups of us together as the nights start to draw in. To be able to take part, observe, create, learn and celebrate together is one of the joys of living in a community with others. We have been celebrating differences and the wide variety of religions represented within our school community during Inter-faith week this week. With almost two thirds of our student body identifying themselves as from a faith background it is important that we understand all of our own rich heritages, cultures and belief systems as they form our individual world views and inform our actions. We continue to do all we can to ensure we are a fully inclusive school, embracing differences and uniqueness. To that end we will be writing to parents over the next few weeks to elicit your views on a few areas prior to our next Parent Forum meeting.

On top of all that, it was also anti-bullying week last week. Some students celebrated and acknowledged how different we all are by wearing odd socks on Monday. Students are receiving focused lessons on the importance of dealing with bullying properly. A group of Student Leaders and the newly formed student council are setting up an 'Anti-Bullying Community' with the tag line 'Anti-Bullying Community – it's as easy as ABC'. They will be running a series of programs to support students in ensuring we continue to develop our school as a place where bullying and abuse of any form is not tolerated but is dealt with properly.

'As a school, we are striving to move towards a more inclusive and safer environment in school through various key projects being worked on by students and staff. We recently began work alongside relevant charities as a part of initiatives to introduce more education and awareness around the issues faced by LGBTQ+ people in a school setting. We look forward to championing this cause in the future and we aim to make the idea of pride and the institution of Finham Park synonymous with one another'. (Student Leaders).

The construction of the new E block is moving on at pace. Foundations are being poured and we expect the steel frame to start being constructed in a few weeks' time. We shall take some time lapse photos so you can see on our website this fabulous resource develop. With so much going on and with so much to celebrate with lights, sparklers, fireworks, and festivals at this darkening time of the year, Christmas can seem a long way off. However, with just a month to go, I wonder when it is deemed acceptable to put up the Christmas lights!

Yours faithfully,

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(Headteacher)

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