



21st July 2022

Dear Parent/Guardian

RE: End of Term Principal's Letter – July 2022

Another academic year comes to an end and HLA has much to reflect on and be proud of.

Due to Covid-19 a number of staff, students and families have been harshly affected during the past year and it has taken a valiant effort from all members of our school community to ensure our students have had as 'normal' a school experience as possible.

In March the school saw the success of its Yr6 Open Evening with pupil numbers for next year at 142 (confirmed) places up from 97 last year. The school's nomination for the TES Awards GOLD Awards in which Highfield Leadership Academy was shortlisted for a community award didn't see HLA bring home a trophy, however, this year HLA were the 'winners' of the Blackpool Gazette Education Awards 'School of the Year', something to be extremely proud of.

The community engagement programme restarted in the spring term with face-to-face activities becoming the 'norm' again, and this term they have gained rapid pace, with a number of school trips and visits taking place and more in person activity recently. The school continues to send many messages of kindness and hope to local care homes and hospices, with many groups including Blackpool Coastal Housing reporting the positive effect this is having on residents and vulnerable elderly people they support. The school continues to have visits from a number of primary schools to develop transition links, using science and sport as a channel to engage pupils, along with activities in school led by the Anti-Bullying ambassadors.

During this half term Highfield has been awarded the Blackpool Beat the Bully Charter Mark Bronze Charter Mark in recognition of HLA's Culture and Kindness and Respect and Be Your Best work. Feedback reported that the school achieved silver and gold standards in several categories so next year the school will be going for gold!

During this term staff and pupils engaged in a number of activities to celebrate the Queens Jubilee.

However, there have also been a number of things that have caused the school community reason for concern.

The departure of Mr Galbraith was a sad loss to the school, but he has gone on to another headship and all wish him the very best for the future. Star Academies Trust will be instating a substantive Principal in time for the September start to the new academic year.

The year has also seen the departure of a number of teaching and support staff, again, all going on to new posts. However, rest assured, the school is fully staffed for the 2022-23 academic year, and recruitment has been effective, securing quality teaching for all.

There have been concerns about the amount of lost learning, due to the effects of Covid-19. The school has been able to put in place, for 2022-23, smaller class sizes and an increased number of sets, which will both improve student learning experiences and ensure more personalised learning for all.

There have been concerns around the quality of communication from the school to parents and the wider community. Again, 2022-23 will see the implementation of an improved communications programme, which will encourage better dialogue between the school and community.



Support from Star Academies Trust will increase, as the school looks to improve its outcomes for all students. The current Year 10, going into Year 11, will receive significant support and intervention to ensure that they have every opportunity to achieve educational success.

School reopens on Friday 2nd September for Staff training, with Year 7s starting on Monday 5th September. All other students return to the school on Tuesday 6th September.

The school wishes all members of its community a restful summer break.

Regards

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Anand Patel', written in a cursive style.

Anand Patel
Interim Principal