



New Building Handover

We are pleased to announce that this week we have moved one step further to moving in to our brand new building. On Tuesday we were told that the contractors have now officially completed the building and we were given a shiny new set of keys and full access.

Unfortunately it will be a further few weeks before we are fully moved in as we still have to organize the putting up of fire-proof doors and arrange for data cabling for IT purposes to be installed. However, we hope to make immediate use of one or two rooms and are planning to move one Year 6 class and all the Year 5 class in there after the Easter break.

The immediate positive benefits of having the building work completed is that we have been able to take down the fencing around the building site. This means that pupils no longer have to walk around the outside of our site to get from block to block. Instead they can simply go through the middle, which is much quicker and easier. In addition, we are pleased to announce that our reception gates will now be much simplified so that visitors are able to access reception straightforwardly after 08:00 each morning.

We allowed our Year 6 pupils into the new building today for the very first time to have a look around and there were many cries of excitement and admiration.



Wendy Baxter
Principal

Catch-up Sessions

Many parents will be aware that we now have a number of different 'catch-up' sessions operating within the academy to help any pupils to reach the new higher national standards that are required of them from this year. We would strongly recommend that pupils are given the opportunity to take full advantage of these sessions as it will benefit them enormously. If you receive a letter asking that your child attend one of these, please do give your permission. If you have any concerns, don't hesitate to contact your child's teacher. Please also continue to encourage your children to use Lexia and Maths Whizz at home.

Ofsted Monitoring Report

As you will already be aware, we had our first Ofsted Monitoring Visit on 15th and 16th December and the report was published on the Ofsted website on 19th January. Whilst we fully recognize that there is still much work to do to return the academy to 'outstanding', we are thrilled that Ofsted are satisfied that we are on the right path to make this happen. We will be sharing the main points of the report with parents during the parents' evenings scheduled for 24th/25th February and listening to your views on how we can work together to continue to improve the academy. In the meantime you can find the full report on their visit on the Ofsted website or via our academy website.



Left: Our new building – now we have to think of a name for it!

Introducing Miss Wheeler



Miss Wheeler joined the academy staff in January of this year. She has travelled a very long way to be with us as her previous home was in Lismore, Australia. Miss Wheeler joins the Year 6 team as class teacher for VI Oxford. She says that her favourite food is chocolate and her favourite hobby is swimming. When asked to tell us something about herself she revealed that she grew up and lived very close to a beautiful beach.

Writing Competition

We were pleased to announce a major new competition for our Year 5 and Year 6 pupils this week. Pupils are asked to write, in their best handwriting, a short essay on the following topic: 'What is the biggest problem facing the children in your community and how would you improve this?' Entries must be on an official entry form available from your child's teacher and the closing date is Thursday 11th February. Judging will take place on 24th February by a distinguished panel. The 12 winners will win a trip to London to take part in the 'WE day' celebrations at Wembley Arena on 9th March. 'WE day' is a celebration of youth making a difference, both locally and globally and takes place across the UK, United States and Canada. It is a prestigious event.

Safeguarding – “Everybody’s business”

We have been concerned recently about a greater than usual number of pupils not being collected in good time at the end of the academy day. This is obviously upsetting for the pupils concerned and leaves us in a difficult position. Please therefore ensure that you pick your children up on time or let us know if you are delayed.

Dates for your diary

Half term holiday – last day of school is Thursday 11th Feb and the academy re-opens at the usual time on Monday 22nd Feb.

Judging for writing competition is on Wed 24th Feb

Parents evenings are on 24th Feb (years 5 and 6) and 25th Feb (years 3 and 4).

World book day is on Thu 3rd March

Emergency Procedures

You may be aware that over the last week or so schools within the City and the Black Country area were evacuated due to a bomb threat which turned out to be a hoax. This follows a number of hoax calls that have led to school evacuations and closures in schools in the Black Country. **Please be assured that these calls were all hoaxes and there was no genuine bomb threat.** Such incidents are extremely rare, and it is important that we don't over-react, or spread panic, especially to our children!

However, it is wise to have emergency procedures in place. In the event of an incident such as the one that faced other schools, or any other incident when the safety of the children is threatened, we will be guided by the emergency services, and will work closely with them. In emergency situations, we will keep you updated as promptly and as often as we can, via the website, text messages and/or Twitter, depending on the facilities available to us. You can help us in two ways:

- 1) Keep this in perspective and don't spread any fear to your children. If you do hear a message that something is going on, please don't panic.
- 2) In the event of a 'lockdown', please do not come to the school or phone the school. This could put you or the children at further risk. We will keep you updated as best we can.

Remember that the risk is very, very small.