



17 November 2017

Dear Parent/Carer

Anti-Social Behaviour at Lunchtimes

Over the past two days, we have made some changes to the way students are able to use the building during lunchtime. We have made these changes as a result of concerns we have about the way in which a significant minority of students have treated the building and other students.

Lunchtime is an opportunity for students to take a break from the learning which has taken place so far during the day and prepare themselves for their next lesson. We hope that students will use this time to eat and participate in healthy and appropriate activities. There are a number of lunchtime activities available for students to occupy their time. We appreciate that for most of our students lunchtime is an opportunity to socialise with friends who live in other villages and who they might not see outside of school.

Until yesterday, students have been able to use the building as they wish. We have maintained an approach that relies on students' maturity and responsibility. If we compare this approach to other schools this is fairly uncommon. Students are often expected to vacate their school buildings during lunchtime.

Our concern with students' behaviour is centred around the practice known as 'lapping'. Students, often in large groups, walk around the building throughout lunchtime. In small numbers this is not an issue. However, over the past few weeks we have experienced increased amounts of anti-social behaviour from these groups of students. Younger and more vulnerable students have experienced intimidation and abuse, and the building has suffered minor damage. This is unacceptable.

We have, on several occasions, tried to impress upon students that this practice cannot continue. A few weeks ago we closed part of the upstairs corridor but found that these students continued to 'lap' through the lower portion of the building.

After consulting with the Student Council we made the decision to close the main corridors of the building to students at lunchtime and expected students to spend their lunchtime outside. This took place yesterday and will continue for the foreseeable future.

Concerns have been raised with us that all of our toilet facilities were closed yesterday, however, there were several toilets available within our sports area. It appears that we underestimated the additional demand students being outside would place on our toilet facilities, and taking this into account we are ensuring that there is additional facilities available from today. We apologise for any inconvenience this has caused and today have made more facilities available. Any student that encounters any issues regarding using the toilet facilities should speak with a member of staff for assistance.

Although we are closing areas of the school building, students will be able to access room for clubs and revision, including E11.

The School Council have suggested that we should consider shortening lunchtime and, therefore, the school day. We will consider this and may consult formally on this suggestion in the New Year.

I would like to thank you for your patience and support while we take necessary steps to ensure the safety and comfort of all of our students. We recognise that the majority of students are more likely to be the victims of anti-social behaviour than those who cause it. We apologise that this action has impacted all students but we hope that the outcome will be positive for all.

If you have any questions, including suggestions about how we can resolve this issue, please contact your child's Head of House.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "A Edmonds". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small horizontal line at the end.

Mr A Edmonds
Headteacher