



# Park Hall Academy

## Principal's 'Welcome Back' Letter



Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> September, 2011

Dear Parent(s)/Carer(s) & Students,

I hope that this letter finds you well rested after a fantastic summer break and also looking forward to the start of another academic year as much as I am. We hope that it will be another year that will see our young people and the Academy build on previous successes and go from strength to strength – I wish everyone the best of luck in achieving this.



However, we have not been resting on our laurels over the holiday period and the staff have been busy starting to turn some of our building and improvement plans into reality.

You will probably notice that we have introduced a new fence alongside the car park and an automated barrier at the main vehicle entrance. We have also been able to re-open the pedestrian entrance to the site near the electricity sub-station on Water Orton Road now that the construction phase of the new building is drawing to a close. These features have been developed to try and improve the safety of our young people by reducing potential risks from “stranger danger” and also from moving vehicles on the site. The pedestrian entrance near the electricity sub-station will now be the only entrance/exit that students should use. We expect the car park barrier to become fully operational next week and we thus request that parents/carers do not attempt to enter the site whilst picking up/dropping off students and instead use Water Orton Road near the pedestrian entrance adjacent to the sub-station. We realise that this will mean a longer walk to and from the car for some people, but we hope you can support us in this attempt to reduce the risks to our young people on the site.

As well as these improvements, we have also re-designed the ground floor student toilet facilities in line with feedback we have received from our students. The boys' toilets now consist entirely of 'cubicles' which we hope will improve student privacy. We have also improved the washing facilities in both the girls' and boys' toilets to provide a better experience for students.

We have also begun to improve other aspects of our facilities for students during their 'social time' in conjunction with the outstanding work of the Academy's Student Council. This has started with the installation of a small amount of fixed external tabling (some of it for table tennis) and seating for students. More will be installed during the next month or so and we also anticipate the construction of an external canopy and extended hard-court area for ball games where the present 'maze' is located – this is planned to be completed during this half-term: weather permitting of course! Additionally, we are also improving the quality of seating and tables in the internal dining areas which we also hope will be completed during the term.

As well as all this development work that occurred during the summer, I hope that you saw the positive press coverage of the students receiving their examination results last month. Both our VIth Form and GCSE results were again the best ever seen at Park Hall – we are tremendously proud of all that the students achieved and would like to send our public congratulations to them and everyone who made it possible. The results are all the more impressive when you consider that last year saw us being in the top 5% of schools and colleges nationally for rates of student progress and this year, the students have gone even further! The highlights include:

- **The best ever total points score per candidate and average points per entry in the sixth form**
- **The first A Star grades at A Level achieved in Park Hall's VIth Form**
- **A rise of over 8% in the percentage of students achieving 5 A\*-C with English and Maths in Year 11**
- **100% (yes, every single student) achieving 5 A\*-C grades in Year 11**
- **A rise of nearly 10% in the percentage of students achieving A\*-C grades in English and Maths in Year 10**
- **Our first ever A\*-C grade passes by Year 9 students: 65% achieved A\*-C in Maths – that is c.20% of the whole of the year group already having a C grade in maths by the time they start Year 10!**

A huge well done to everyone involved – these results confirm that Park Hall continues to improve and set a very high standard for others to live up to! (On the subject of further improvement, if you are a Parent/Carer of a Park Hall student and would like to take part in and contribute to the decision making around how we move forward, we will shortly be distributing the nominations for our Parent/Carer Council. This vital group of dedicated parents/carers continues to play a very important role in our development and would welcome your support and participation – please keep a look out for the nomination papers and consider volunteering to help take Park Hall to even more success).

We wish you all the very best for the 2011-12 academic year and thank you for your continued support in making sure Park Hall continues to improve.

Tony Morrison, Principal