



**RESILIENCE • RESPECT • INTEGRITY • COMMUNITY**

The Ongar Academy, Fyfield Road, Ongar, CM5 0AN

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Executive Headteacher: Mr. A. Osborne

First Deputy Headteacher: Ms. E. Ruffles

3<sup>rd</sup> April 2019

Dear Parents and Carers,

### **End of Spring Term – A Letter from Mr. Osborne**

I am writing my Easter/End of Spring Term letter thinking "How on earth am I going to keep this to a few pages?". I warn you now this will be a long but thoroughly enjoyable read, and you will appreciate all of the wonderful activities and achievements of our students.

#### **I promised our whole community three things;**

1. That this would be a community school - that serves its community and the students in it.
2. That I would put our students on the Map, and that TOA would be an outstanding school with outstanding opportunities and outcomes for all.
3. That I would create a harmonious relationship between all stakeholders; students, staff and parents/carers.

The constant feedback we have had from you has been, at times, simply overwhelming. On Twitter, Facebook and in letters, words and phrases like "inspirational", "proud", "brilliant", "a credit", "superbly behaved", "kind and courteous" and "impeccable manners" are being used. To be honest, when I hear these comments I am the proudest Headteacher alive. The reason why I am proud, is I know that these words are a true reflection of our students. They are amazing.

Communication between the school and parents is exemplary, and you as parents and carers have told me that time and time again. I am delighted that you have received our new communication strategy so well. One parent has said we now communicate too much - I was always told you can never win as a Headteacher! On a serious note, our weekly bulletins are now about 7 pages long and we have sent over 70 letters of correspondence to make sure everyone is aware of what is going on in our outstanding school.

I have said I will not tolerate or accept negativity about my children or staff, and I will continue with that ethos. Our children, staff, parents and carers need to be respected and feel valued. I will be relentless in my pursuit for excellence and I will not back down on the fact that we will all treat each other with kindness and civility. Again, I truly believe that we do that here at TOA now. We don't take to social media to vent, we act like adults and communicate properly and correctly as we are role models to our children. I am so happy that most parents really do respect the school enough to keep that ethos alive and well.





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I think it is so important to list all of the opportunities that students have had at the school in **just nine weeks**. It is mind blowing - this school is really like a dream factory.

- The Year 8 Architecture Showcase
- The launch of the brand new curriculum - which has so many new subjects for students to opt for in Year 9
- The PTA Bags for Life Campaign
- District Champions for Netball in Year 8 and 9
- Curriculum breakfasts for parents
- Rewards and Celebration assemblies
- Cinema experience in the school and the PTA providing refreshments
- A student sports person of the term going to an England game with his Dad, free of charge as a reward.
- Year 10 trip to the Sky Academy
- Talks from BAFTA and BRIT winning movie directors and music producers
- Red Nose Day Bake sales and Karaoke
- Debating Club and Media club
- Over 20 enrichment clubs a week
- The Jack Petchey Speak Out Challenge
- World Book Day Celebrations
- International Woman's Week celebrations
- LGBT week activities
- Year 10 Mock Examinations
- The Grand Library opening by a famous author
- Inter-house Sporting competitions
- New art work around the school - to make the school feel like a "home from home"
- Cancer Has No Hope - where we fundraised for a local community member to have cancer treatment abroad
- Our new published Teaching and Learning Handbook
- Year 10 Pizza Party Prize Reward
- Trips planned to France, Spain and Germany
- The Swimming Gala
- The 10s of football, basketball, netball, rugby matches
- Rock Climbing Trip
- Children's Mental Health Week work with yoga and mindfulness
- Shining Star cards - we have had 70 students winning student of the week this term.

I truly could go on and on and on and on.....





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However true testimony to students being happy with their school is their conduct; their attendance and their achievement. Attendance is over 96% - way over the national average and a huge improvement on last academic year. Exclusions are down with even more children than last academic year. Data is showing us the students are 80% on track to hit their end of year targets. We will work with the 20% to make sure they work hard and make target, and support the 80% to exceed expectations and do even better.

Also you may be aware for next year 7 we have a waiting list of over 150 - with 353 putting us down as their school of choice.

I have also made some fantastic appointments to the school. As the school will be 600 next year I have had to increase our staff base.

We have new teachers joining us after Easter:

Mrs Miah -Head of Computing

Sarah Madge - Head of ICT

Ms Adenuga - taking Ms Matchett's timetable

Mrs Mansell - Maths and returning from maternity leave

Mrs Robinson Smith - RE and our new Assistant Headteacher, in charge of Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 development

Ms Silverton – Pastoral Manager and counsellor

In September we have:

Mr Blair - Geography

Miss Taylor - MFL

Mrs Holland - MFL

Miss Bansel - English

Miss Hunter - English

Mr Faisal - English

Mrs Dickinson - Science

Mrs Clarke-Howard - Maths

Miss Price - History

So at the time of writing this letter TOA is fully staffed.

On that note, I do wish two members of our staff who are leaving well as they venture to pastures new; Miss Matchett is going travelling and we cannot wait hear of her experiences in Australia and New Zealand, and Miss Montgomery is going part time in a local school so she can concentrate her time on her activities outside of school. They have both shown commitment and loyalty and a real talent for teaching, and will be deeply missed by our students and staff.





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May I wish you all a restful Easter/Spring Break and thank you from the bottom of my heart for your loyalty, dedication and kindness towards myself and my staff, as we have rapidly transformed this school in to an outstanding place to learn, flourish and work.

We start back at our normal time (8:45am on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> April). Please check MILK to make sure you have the correct week and Timetable.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. A. Osborne

Executive Headteacher

