



# Abraham Darby Academy

Haberdashers' Adams' Federation

Members of the Family of Haberdashers' Schools

Principal's News

Week 1

5<sup>th</sup> September 2008

**Welcome...** to the first edition of the Principal's weekly newsletter.

We are pleased to welcome parents and carers as members of the Abraham Darby Academy community. I believe strongly that education is about instilling values and creating dreams.

At Abraham Darby our philosophy will be :

*"Talking up students' aspirations is crucial. If you look out for the things that people are doing well and emphasise the positive, dealing with the negative in a sensible and tactful way, you're likely to make people exceed their own notion of their potential. And that's what education is to a large extent about, isn't it? Helping people go beyond where they think they might go."*



and the mission:

*'To develop in young people of all abilities the traits necessary for them to play a useful, productive and leading role in society in the Twenty First Century, and to enable them to exceed their own notion of their potential.'*

To this end I have **four aspirations** for all students: -

1. I want to develop students of all abilities who are ambitious, hardworking and successful.
2. It's more than just examination success. I want to see students excited by their studies and developing an intellectual interest and curiosity, which will stay with them through their life. Such an interest is fostered by the ethos and environment we create, the style of teaching and learning in academy and the range of experiences offered by departments beyond the classroom.
3. I would like to see students fully involved in extra-curricular activities and aspiring to do these to the best standards possible.
4. Finally I would like to encourage all students to aspire to the highest standards of behaviour and to have principles and values.

## New Year 7 Students arrive on their first day.



## New Academy Uniform.

The overwhelming majority of students look “stunning” in their new uniforms. I do want them arriving at the Academy looking smart and businesslike and I would ask parents to support us in this. It presents an image of the Academy and sets the tone for lessons.

Mrs Broadbent is going to establish a ‘Second Hand Uniform Shop’ and when students outgrow their uniform we would encourage you to use the Shop. Clean items in good repair will be gratefully received. We hope it will prove to be a cheap and economical way for parents to maintain uniform standards.

## Education at its best is a partnership between the Academy and home.

*“Parental aspiration and involvement is the single most critical factor in determining a pupil’s success” DCSF*

Education at its best is also a partnership between home and the Academy. We need you to share our ambitions and aspirations; we need you to encourage and support your children in their work and activities in the Academy and we want you to share your concerns with us.

You can support your children by:

- Ensuring regular and punctual attendance (No holidays in term time please).
- Homework is a crucial and vital part of the learning process. They need:
  - A quiet place to study.
  - Set times of study. As a general rule, Year 7 will be given 2 x 30 minutes per night, increasing to 2 x 40 minutes by Year 9. By the time students are in Year 11 they will be receiving 2 x 1 hour each night.
  - Do take an active interest - cajole, encourage & help.
  - Set targets. Encourage high standards.
  - Display the homework timetable prominently.
  - Check the student planner.

*Encourage them to be curious. Encourage them to take things further. Encourage them to become independent.*

## Your points of contact in the Academy if you have concerns are:

- The Support Staff. The teaching staff may be in lessons all day, so more often than not you will talk to the Support Staff who will arrange for the teacher to phone or arrange an appointment for you. (Please don't shoot the messenger!!!)
- Form Mentors.
- Heads of Year.
- The Inclusion Manager
- The Vice Principals.
- Myself.

Remember it is easier to deal with minor problems than major ones. So if you have a concern no matter how minor do get in touch, rather than allowing them to accumulate into a major one. We may not always be able to come to a solution straight away. You only hear one side of the story. Things may be more complicated than they first seem. Allow us the time to investigate properly.

## The Whole Person

Academic progress is important, but the development of the whole person is also an important part of the ethos of the Academy. I want students to be involved in a wide range of extra curricular and curriculum enrichment activity - Sport, Music, Dance, Drama, Clubs & Societies and House Events. Once again your role is vital. Please do encourage &/or cajole your children to take part. Please do come along and support. If that activity is sport, support the whole team & applaud the opposition!! The mantra as always is *"Encouragement, encouragement, encouragement"*

## Creative Partnerships

The Academy has been designated Telford and Wrekin's first Creative Partnership Change School. This brings additional monies to the Academy but especially a Creative Partnership Agent who will work to develop partnerships across the whole curriculum with outside organisations – industry and commerce, arts groups, tourism, theatres, museums – in order to demonstrate the relevance of academic subjects and provide opportunities to develop creativity in learning. We hope to develop self confidence in students and to raise aspirations by giving students an insight to how creative thinking can be used in the workplace. If you wish to learn more about the project or have ideas of how you might be able to help, please contact us.

## Public Exam Results

Although it is important to remember that the Academy is a totally new institution, it would be remiss at this stage not to recognise the Public Exam results of the Abraham Darby School. For the past two years Abraham Darby has been the most improved School in T&W and in 2008 it came in the top 50% of schools in T&W in terms of the % of students gaining 5 A\* - C grades and 5A\* - C grades (including English and Maths). As I have always said the challenge now is to turn an improving school into an outstanding Academy.

## Saturday Morning Music College

Saturday Morning Music College commences Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2008. The music college operates band rehearsals and instrumental lessons. It is open to all students of Abraham Darby Academy, post 16 students from the Academy and students from local feeder primary schools. All instrumental lessons in the Academy are free of charge. To learn more about your child taking instrumental lessons please contact Miss Morton.

## GCSE Art Trip to Barcelona

At the end of last term I wrote to the parents of all Year 10 and 11 students taking GCSE Art and Applied Art regarding a possible trip to Barcelona to see the work of world famous artists as well as the sights and sounds of the exciting city of Barcelona. If you are interested please send me a deposit of £50 by 30th September.

If you need further information please contact me as soon as possible.



C. Stack



## New Head Boy and Head Girl

Shaun Caldicott and Ellie Ballinger, in their new Academy uniform, but before being presented with their Academy Prefect ties.

## Sport

**Inter-House Sport** begins next week

### Girls

Inter-house Netball for year 9, 10 and 11 will take place on Tuesdays in Week B week starting after school and finishing at 4pm. Year 7 and 8 house teams will compete against each other in Week A..

### Boys

Inter-House football is on Thursdays and will follow the girls format. Year 9, 10 and 11 every Thursday week B, year 7 and 8 week A.

### Clubs

Boxing club every Monday starting on 15<sup>th</sup> September

Football Club every other Thursday when they are not taking part in inter-house sport.

Rugby club every Tuesday

## Parent E mail addresses.

If you have an E mail address you can supply the Academy, please do so. This would mean that you can receive future newsletters by E mail. (The newsletters will also be placed on the Academy website) If we have your E mail address it will also allow us over time to begin to supply you with a lot more information about what's going on in the Academy and your children's progress in and outside the classroom