



THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE, BISHOP'S CASTLE

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Dear Parents/Carers

Welcome to the New Academic Year

We are now two weeks into the new academic year, and the majority of our students have settled well into their new timetables.

At the end of last year, our Governors thanked staff, in light of the monitoring they carried out throughout the year, for maintaining a school that provides:

- Mutual respect between staff and students
- A range of support available for all students when needed
- Examination results that are regularly a source of pride
- A safe environment in which students can learn
- A culture in which students are not afraid to speak their minds

They also noted that parents' concerns are responded to promptly.

We are determined to build on these strengths this year, despite the challenges that undoubtedly lie ahead. You can help, not least by ensuring that your child attends school regularly. If students are not here, they cannot learn. If there is a serious problem affecting attendance, please make sure that we are informed as soon as possible.

During the summer, we made several regrettable redundancies. These were necessitated by the national reduction in education funding, together with a reduced number of students progressing from primary schools. This has impacted our flexibility as a school, and I hope you will bear this in mind when contacting the school.

Many of you are aware of the historical debt inherited by the school some 17 years ago. While this continues to present challenges, we have made steady progress in reducing it. We also recognise that many parents in Wales are facing financial pressures following the withdrawal of transport funding by Powys County Council. We understand that there will be a new service bus route soon between Newtown and Craven Arms Railway Station that may help mitigate this issue.

We are in the early stages of exploring academy conversion. As the only local authority-maintained secondary school in Shropshire, we inevitably receive very limited support. Becoming part of an established Multi-Academy Trust would provide greater financial stability, as well as access to support that is not currently available to us. It would also create more opportunities for staff to share and develop good practice. I will provide more detailed information as discussions progress.

We are always looking for opportunities to celebrate the successes of our students. On Friday 25 September, the school will celebrate the international success of one of our former students, Oliver Morgan, who recently won five silver medals at the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow. As part of our celebration of Oliver's achievements, we are delighted to rename his former school house in his honour. Kerry Ridgeway House will become Morgan House for this academic year, recognising the inspiration his success provides to current and future students.

As we move further into the academic year, I would like to thank students, parents and staff for their continued support and commitment to our school community. By working together, maintaining high expectations and celebrating the achievements of our young people, we can ensure that this is another successful and rewarding year for everyone. We look forward to the opportunities ahead and to recognising many more student successes in the months to come.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R Thorley', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mr R Thorley
Headteacher