



The Ripley Academy and Sixth Form

Executive Headteacher: **Mrs H Frost-Briggs** BA (Hons)



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Head of School: **Mr J de Rijk** BA (Hons)
Deputy Headteacher: **Mrs J Thawley** BSc (Hons)
Deputy Headteacher: **Mr M Kirkland** BSc (Hons)
Assistant Headteacher: **Mr S Kingsland** BSc (Hons)

Good afternoon,

Update from the Executive Head Teacher

I wanted to take the opportunity at the end of term to write to parents/carers and give you all an update on some exciting recent events and news in school. The spring term has flown by and students are ready for a break I'm sure before we enter into the exam season and the summer term.

Staffing – fond farewells and welcomes

We say goodbye this term to three colleagues who leave us for pastures new; Phoebe Jones, Sian Fidler and Mark Kirkland. Phoebe has been at Ripley for two terms and leave us for a permanent contract at another school. We wish her all the very best for her future. Sian Fidler has dedicated many years to the children with Special Educational Needs or Disability at The Ripley Academy and we will miss her kindness and her care for SEND children. Sian has secured a promotion at another school and will continue her work there. Mark Kirkland, who leads Teaching and Learning and Sixth Form on the Senior Leadership Team, takes on a Deputy Headship at another school and I have every confidence he will be hugely successful there. I would like to thank these colleagues for their hard work and we wish them all the very best for the future.

Stepping into their shoes, we welcome Emily Haas and Jack Ritchie into the Science department. We welcome Sarah Robinson-Kent into a new role as Assistant Head Teacher – SENCO to lead up the SEND department with immediate effect and have just appointed Miss Emilia Iwanczuk as Assistant Head Teacher – Sixth Form who will be joining us in September. Jan de Rijk will be leading on all areas pertaining to the Sixth Form in the interim period. I am excited to see how these new appointments will continue to steer the school to success.

Parents' Evenings

We'd love to hear from you as to whether you benefit from the Parents Consultation Evenings' being online or whether you would prefer to come into school and return to an era of face-to-face appointments. We can understand the merits both brings; one allowing quick and easy access from home, the other welcoming you into the school to have a conversation with teaching staff face-to-face and see where your child spends every working day! Please would you click on the link below to vote in the very brief survey so I can glean parental preference.

<https://forms.office.com/e/phBJ1PcL2v>

The Ripley Academy, Peasehill, Ripley, Derbyshire, DE5 3JQ

The Ripley Big Ask

Student Voice is hugely important to me. In the last survey in January, the vast majority of students reported that they felt safe in school, that they know how to keep themselves safe online, that they know who to go to in school if they need to report something and that they enjoy learning and are kind to other students. This was reassuring to me as Head Teacher to the school. My standards, however, are very high and I aspire for 100% of children to enjoy school, be happy, be kind and feel safe. Consequently, I decided to ask all senior and pastoral middle leaders of the school to complete "The Ripley Big Ask" in order to gain a deeper understanding of any issues so we can work quickly to improve any areas of the school which need it. All students across all seven year groups have done Student Voice group sessions with these leaders where they have shared their thoughts and feelings with us on what they love about the school, what could be better, how the school deal with bullying, what behaviour is like and many more. I've thoroughly enjoyed conducting these interviews myself which enabled me to reflect on the experience in school that our young people have and how we can further improve it.

We then conducted "The Ripley Big Answer" where I will spoke to students in Assembly to outline our plan to improve any common areas cited by the students as areas for development. They talked of wanting further support with the toilets in school, with reporting incidents of unkind behaviour, asked for a better rewards system and highlighted some issues with the lunchtime arrangements. In response to this, we:

- Created a CALL IT OUT online button to press to report unkind behaviour or bullying as an alternative and anonymous way of reporting an incident or issue
- Have appointed a Student Leadership Coordinator to re-introduce and strengthen The Student Council
- Re-allocated the staff duty rota to position more staff members around the site and positioned at the toilets
- Employed further midday supervisors to increase vigilance
- Increased severity of sanction for anti-social behaviour at lunchtime
- Re-evaluated our provision of lunchtime clubs and will seek to broaden opportunity here
- Explored different queuing configurations to ensure students queue calmly for lunch
- Introduced a special outdoor provision for getting hot food for Year 7 only
- Allocated certain year groups to certain toilets so all students aren't mixing in all areas
- Rewritten and published our Behaviour Policy so it outlined more clearly to students and parents/carers what will happen if a student purposefully breaks a school rule
- Introduced a new rewards system through the introduction of Class Charts

Rewards

We are wanting to modernise and enhance the current provision for rewards so students are clear about how, when and in what way they will be rewarded. Students have learnt this term in Assemblies from Deputy Head Teacher Mrs Thawley that they will now receive achievement points for being AMBITIOUS, COMMITTED and PROUD; following The Ripley Way. This will start the launch of a new Rewards Policy and

a Rewards Store where students can purchase items with their points. The students seem excited about this change and hopefully you are enjoying the Class Charts app and are able to track your child's progress.

Student Leadership

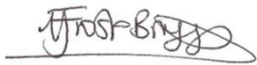
Next half term we will be introducing some new exciting student leadership opportunities across The Ripley Academy. We have a range of roles including Head Students of KS3/4/5, Form Representatives, Student Council and Enrichment Ambassadors. We are really keen to get students involved in the life of the school, adding to the rich and vibrant student experience that we offer here. Further details will be announced in assembly on our return after Easter.

Online safety

The issue of online safety is a constant concern for all of us in a modern technological world. I will always take a moment to share best practice we see regarding managing device stress and any tips for parents regarding online safety in case it can be of any use to you. Attached to this letter is an interesting newsletter from NOS (National Online Safety).

Thank you for your ongoing support and wishing you a lovely Easter break and all the very best.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mrs H Frost-Briggs', with a horizontal line underneath.

Mrs H Frost-Briggs

Executive Head Teacher

