



16<sup>th</sup> September 2013

Dear Parents/Carers

## **Personal Development Day for Year 7 – 26<sup>th</sup> September 2013**

I am writing to give you more information about the first of our Personal Development (PD) days, which will take place on Thursday 26 September. You may be aware that we have decided to suspend our normal timetable on four days this year, in order to focus on helping students develop some of the key personal skills they will need to be successful learners both in school and when they leave to complete further study and (ultimately) employment. We undertook an extensive review of our curriculum last year, and a small group of staff have worked extremely hard since then to bring this first day to fruition.

The theme for our inaugural PD Day is 'Determination'. Thus, on the 26<sup>th</sup> September, your son or daughter will be engaged with activities which focus on developing their resilience, teamwork and creative thinking. They will undertake a series of tasks and challenges which will be unlike anything they have ever done in their regular curriculum at Hinchingsbrooke School. We are keen to maintain an element of surprise at this stage, but we are able to outline some of the detail of the activities and thinking behind them for your child's year group on 26<sup>th</sup> September as follows;

Year 7 students, as mentioned at the recent induction evening, are being split into four smaller groups of 75, to take part in one of four 'directorates' days. They will rotate through each of the four directorate days on each PD day this year, thus every student will have the chance to participate in the activities planned by all four directorates. Students will be answering a key question on each directorate day;

- How can the World Health Organisation look to eliminate disease in a global society?
- What made Lewis Hamilton?
- How can we piece together the evidence to solve a (fictional) murder at Hinchingsbrooke House?
- What use can we make of technology to design a future me?

Further detail of the practicalities, including groups, clothing, timings etc. will be available from form tutors in due course. Teaching and support staff, as well as 6<sup>th</sup> form students, are assigned to each of the year groups, and so there will be a high degree of supervision at all times during the day, with purposely low teacher: pupil ratios. The start and finish times for PD days are exactly the same as a normal day, lunch will still be provided and buses will also run as normal.

This first PD Day promises to be a landmark moment in the educational lives of the students, with a specific focus on building their portfolio of skills and attributes and enabling them to become more determined to succeed in other areas of their lives (both educational and extra-curricular). In addition, the successful completion of the activities offers an excellent way for students to earn points for their house. I hope that you will agree that our plans are exciting, ambitious for our students (and staff) and will lead to excellent outcomes.

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Buses will run as normal on the Personal Development day. Please note that it is the responsibility of any child who uses an asthma inhaler or similar to carry this with them at all times on the day.

If you have any questions relating to these arrangements, please do not hesitate to contact me in the first instance and I will be only too happy to provide further information.

Yours faithfully,

Lee Walker – Vice Principal

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