



Ark Burlington Danes Academy

Wednesday, December 18, 2019

Dear Parents and Carers,

It is with great pleasure that I write to you at the end of another successful term at Ark Burlington Danes Academy. The Christmas season is upon us and our school community have been celebrating it in full effect. Some of the highlights have included:

- A superb 'Winter Showcase' concert on Monday 2nd December, in which students both past and present entertained us with their musical talents. I am especially excited by the preview performance of Beauty and the Beast, which will be our school musical next term!
- Our Courageous Advocacy campaign, which has raised awareness of the issue of homelessness both in our school and across our community. Our students have been writing letters to our local MPs to demand action on this issue.
- The generous donations from our students and school community towards our Christmas hamper collections. A group of our students delivered them on Tuesday where they were gratefully received.
- Our rewards ceremonies that have been taking place across all year groups this week, in which we celebrate the academic achievements of our students as well as their work in upholding our academy values.
- A really positive and constructive 'Evening with the Principal' on Monday 9th December, in which parents fed back and discussed the successes and challenges of our academy. This was the third parents' forum this year - I look forward to welcoming you all to the next one at 9.30am on Monday 20th January 2020.
- The great news that Ark Burlington Danes Academy was the most improved school in Hammersmith and Fulham in 2018-19, with a 10% improvement in GCSE English & Maths 4+ outcomes.
- The superb achievements of our current Year 11 cohort in our recent assessment cycle, who are a full 10% ahead of where Year 11 were at the same time last year. They confirm the positive academic trajectory our school is on and represent our commitment to ensure that every child achieves to their fullest potential.
- Our amazing Christmas lunch for staff and students on Tuesday, which gave us all a great sense of Christmas cheer!

I would like to take this opportunity to update parents on some key staffing changes that will be taking place at the end of term.

- Mr Whittle, our Head of Humanities, will be leaving as he relocates to the east of England this Christmas. We thank him for all his work in the History and Geography departments and wish him all the best for the year ahead.
- Ms Charalambous will be taking over as Head of History from Mr Whittle. She will therefore be stepping down from her post as Head of Year 9 from January 2020.
- Mr Patel will be taking over as Head of Year 9 from January 2020. Mr Patel has been Head of Business and a Senior Pastoral Leader at BDA, and will bring a wealth of experience to the role. Mr Patel and Ms Charalambous will be working closely together to ensure a smooth transition for our students in January in this change of roles.

We are also saying goodbye to one of our longest serving members of staff, Ms Bell. Ms Bell will be retiring this Christmas after working at BDA for 30 years. Many of our parents will remember being taught by her with fondness, and we have several teachers on our staff who are alumni and were taught by her too. We will miss her experience, wisdom and commitment to our students, and wish her the very best for her retirement.

Our students have plenty of work to do over the holiday season to keep themselves sharp for January, but it is important to take the time to rest and relax with family as well. I would like to wish all parents, students, staff and our wider community a peaceful and restful Christmas break, and look forward to welcoming our students back to school bright and early on Tuesday 7th January.

Wishing you all a very merry Christmas and a happy new year!

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Paul Bhatia', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Paul Bhatia
Principal