

Dear Parents and Carers

January 2018

You may be aware of some recent adverse publicity surrounding Beaufort on the subject of bullying. I would like to take this opportunity to make a few points of my own and supply some balance.

Bullying in any setting is totally unacceptable. *"Is there bullying at your school?"* is often the first question a Head Teacher is asked by prospective parents. If we answer honestly then the answer should be "yes" but with an explanation that explains this in more detail.

Beaufort is a large secondary academy and represents the wider community. Within any community there are some who choose to spend time making life difficult, challenging or downright unpleasant. The key therefore is what we do about it.

At Beaufort that is very clear. When we know about something we deal with it. We accept that we do not always solve every issue first time. Teenagers are complicated individuals and some things take a little longer to unpick. Normal channels of communication may reasonably be an initial phone call to the child's Tutor or Head of Year, or it might be via email, or an arranged visit to the academy to meet the appropriate person and start the process of dealing with concerns.

Recently, and regrettably, a small number of parents have chosen to air their grievances on social media, opening the doors for anonymous individuals or former pupils from many years ago, to air a false or an exaggerated grievance without the right of reply from the Academy. Sadly the small number of parents with genuine concerns are often overwhelmed by this.

Let me assure you all that there is no sudden epidemic of bullying at Beaufort. As I stated in my introduction to this letter Beaufort is a school like any other as far as this issue is concerned.

Over the past couple of weeks we have seen the worst of social media and its deeply negative impact it has. I for one have learned from it. I can assure you all that my excellent team of staff are working with parents on genuine concerns that have arisen through well-established channels. I am meeting with the academy governors and with Richard Graham MP, having expressed my concern that false allegations can have regarding the potential damage to the Academy's good reputation. Particularly during this exciting time of significant growth in size and popularity.

Finally, I list below the email addresses of my Senior Leadership Team and the contact details of the five Academy Heads of Year who should be contacted regarding any concerns you may have in the first instance.

Alternatively you can ring us on 01452 301381.

May I also take this opportunity to thank the many parents who have spoken to me recently, expressing their support for the Academy and what we stand for.

P.T.O.



Beaufort Co-operative Academy

Part of **OUR** Co-operative Academies Trust

Senior Leadership Team

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Head of Year 9

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Head of Year 10

Mrs E Hammond - e.hammond@beaufort.coop

Head of Year 11

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Yours sincerely

David Bishop
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