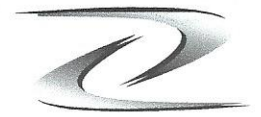


October 2019



ARETÉ  
LEARNING  
TRUST

Chief Executive Officer  
Mrs C M Brooker

Dear parents and carers

We've had a great start to the new school year: welcoming Northallerton School into the trust, starting work on the school redevelopment project, celebrating the success of our students in each of the schools and extending collaborative work to secure further improvements in all three.

It is always a pleasure to visit the schools and to meet parents, students and staff. During a long career in education, I have always appreciated the support of the vast majority of parents. In recent years, however, schools have seen a worrying trend in the attitude of some parents which sets a very poor example to young people and compromises the well-being and safety of staff. Sadly, we have even witnessed this in our schools, including parents threatening and intimidating staff, using foul and abusive language, undermining staff members in front of children and actively encouraging children to disobey the reasonable instructions of their teachers. It has even been necessary to ban parents from our school grounds because of their behaviour. Is it any wonder that with role models like this, their children struggle to follow the most basic school rules which they don't regard as applicable to them?

Put simply, teachers' roles have become increasingly challenging and we need the full support of parents to ensure that our schools do enable all young people to develop into responsible, successful and respectful adults. Discipline is not a negative word – it is not about adults proving they are in control and all powerful. As parents and as teachers, it is our *responsibility* to guide young people and give correction, making sure they learn to take responsibility for their actions and, when they don't do so, realise they have to accept the consequences of their actions. This is real care, not control.

Our schools have behaviour management policies and systems. For these to work to benefit children, we need all the adults to do their part at all times and, most importantly, to be consistent in working together with us, to model the same reasonable expectations, values and attitudes. There are many parents who can testify to this being the only way that positive change to the challenging behaviour of their children was secured.

What we can't have is –

- "I support the school and want good behaviour but ....
- "I'm not going to allow my child to do a detention ....
- "You have been too soft on the other child ....
- "I don't want my child punished until I know what is happening to the other one...
- "My child doesn't lie and told me he didn't ....
- "She's usually really good, can't you let her off ....
- "You can't punish my child when I tell him to ignore what you say ...

“ Being the best we can be by uniting schools, communities and families, to secure success for all young people. ”



Areté Learning Trust  
Station Road  
Stokesley  
North Yorkshire  
TS9 5AL



01642 710050



office@aretelearningtrust.org



/...cont.

Ask to discuss an incident or concern by all means: we might not always agree but we should never argue in front of the children. We do make mistakes and if we do, we'll try our best to put them right. I would ask all parents of children in ALT schools to –

- trust the judgement and professionalism of staff
- communicate any concern calmly and courteously
- avoid using social media to air concerns more appropriately dealt with directly with the school
- insist that homework is completed to the best of your children's ability
- discuss with your children what they are learning
- ensure they are on time and bring the correct equipment
- ensure they arrive at school in smart, respectable, correct uniform
- reinforce our expectations and behaviour standards
- avoid condoning poor manners or behaviour
- celebrate their success, improvements and effort

When parents question our decisions in front of their child they are not backing or working with us. This builds resentment and it sends a message that it's all right with you for children to misbehave or under-perform. We will never achieve our goals for them, or see them become "the best they can be" – our aspiration for all the children you trust to our care.

Please contact the school your child attends if you wish to discuss any aspect of this letter which all three headteachers fully support.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mrs. C.M. Brooker". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Mrs. C.M. Brooker**  
CEO, Areté Learning Trust