31 August 2016

Dear Parents

After a relaxing summer holiday and building on last year’s successes, our staff are looking forward to welcoming students back into their classrooms, filling them with energy, enthusiasm and inspiring ambitions. With over 90 new families joining the school this year, it is important to share with you our school’s Vision, Mission and Promises that will drive decisions and create new opportunities for our students this year.

**Our Vision**

A genuinely ambitious school community.

**Our Mission**

To provide the highest quality learning driven by outstanding teachers within a culture of pride and respect, that will empower our students to succeed.

**Our Promises**

1. We promise that your child will experience creative and challenging learning through inspirational teaching.

2. We promise to nurture a sense of pride in both our individual and collective achievements.

3. We promise to instill a culture of respect from all, for all.

Keeping our governing values of Productive Paranoia, Empirical Creativity and Fanatical Discipline in mind, as well as our ambition for outstanding learning, I would like to remind you of some important points concerning the Secondary School:

*Punctuality*

All Secondary students are expected to arrive at school by 07:15 so they can go to their respective locker to organise themselves and be ready to attend Tutor Time at 07:20, equipped with the relevant learning materials.

*Curriculum*

As many of you are aware, our school reviewed its curriculum offer at Key Stage 3 over the past couple of years. NAISAK uses a personalised approach to learning that inspires ambition and supports the students in working towards producing exceptional progress and achievement in every subject. The NAISAK’s academic approach is based on two very strong curricula. At Key Stage 3, all subjects follow the British National Curriculum (English, Mathematics, Science, Humanities, Modern Foreign Languages, Creative Design, Expressive Arts and Physical Education). The three core subjects of English, Mathematics and Science follow in parallel the Cambridge International Examinations Curriculum. The combination of both curricula allows the students to best prepare for their first milestone in Year 9 as they sit the Cambridge Checkpoint 1 Examinations, and to continue their learning path towards their second milestone in Year 11 as they sit the IGCSEs. In line with the Nord Anglia Education philosophy and our ambitious mission, all subjects are planned to enhance personal learning and international mindedness. In order to support the delivery of these curricula and the practice of the necessary skills, the school

has once again purchased some fantastic resources to further develop the depth and width of our students’ learning.

*Building Learning Power*

NAISAK will continue to embed the Building Learning Power (BLP) philosophy throughout the school in order to enhance a variety of skills, with an emphasis on three fundamental ones: oral communication, problem solving and collaboration, as reflected in the end-of-term reports. All lessons are carefully planned to ensure that your child will have opportunities to strengthen their learning muscles of Resilience, Resourcefulness, Reflectiveness and Reciprocity. We encourage you to talk to your child about these learning capacities and to keep looking for opportunities within the home for them to be enriched. For more information about BLP, please visit <http://www.buildinglearningpower.com/>.

*Assessment*

Assessment across the Secondary School will follow the same approach, reviewed and updated last year. All students will be assessed throughout the term through continuous assessment (worth 30% for the core subjects), and at the end of the term with a test paper (worth 70% for the core subjects) sat during the exam week. The objective is to prepare our students to perform under the pressure of examination conditions and time constraints, as this is what they will face for future official examinations. At Key Stage 3, achieving 50% in all subjects and a rating of 4 out of 5 in the criteria for ‘Pride & Respect’ and ‘Preparedness’ is the minimum expectation at NAISAK. We consider that for a student to make adequate progress, ratings and percentages should remain the same (there could be a slight fluctuation of more or less 3%) from one reporting period to the next. If the ratings and percentages (by more than 3%) increase, then we consider that a student has made outstanding progress. Although attainment is crucial, we consider progress to be more reflective of a student’s dedication to his/her studies and more indicative of future achievements. In order to guide progress, the teachers have written Yearly Learning Objectives (YLOs) for English First Language, Mathematics and Science at Key Stage 3, as per Nord Anglia Education’s expectations following the assessment paradigm shift in the British educational system last year. You can find the YLOs in your child’s Communication Book. Being ambitious, the team of teachers is working hard to write YLOs in the other academic subjects (English Second Language and Humanities). You will have the chance to discuss the YLOs at the Parent-Teacher Meet and Greet in October, but please do not hesitate to contact me or your child’s teachers should you wish to discuss these earlier. At Key Stage 4, our assessment rationale strictly follows the IGCSE structure and grade boundaries. As such, only IGCSE grades (alongside our ‘Pride & Respect’ and ‘Preparedness’ criteria) are reported for IGCSE subjects at KS4, not percentages.

*Home Learning*

The students will record their home learning in their Communication Book, detailing the task given and the date the teacher expects the work to be handed in. The teachers will tick the home learning record to confirm that the student copied the information accurately. However, it is crucial that you, as parents, discuss the home learning tasks with your child and offer support if need be. The amount of home learning given may vary from one day to another, but overall, we expect your child to complete at least 2 hours of home learning per school day and to organise his/her home time to meet the different deadlines set. The Secondary School has purchased a software called ‘Show My Homework’ to support the students and their families with regard to home learning expectations. Another letter will be sent home once the software is live, towards the end of September. Log pages relating to

home learning tasks have been added at the end of the Communication Book for parents to easily assess their child’s performance in terms of home learning completion rate/quality of completion. Passwords for online learning platforms such as Mathletics, Reading Eggs or Global Campus will be shared with the students at the beginning of the term. Please encourage your child to use these online platforms as a means of consolidating work that has been completed in school, or simply exploring new academic avenues.

*Communication*

It is important for your child to know that the relationship between home and school is strong. You are expected to check your child’s Communication Book each day for any notes written or information inputted in the log pages by the teachers. In the same way, you can write any messages you wish to communicate to your child’s tutor/teachers. Please do not hesitate to contact the school if you would like to arrange a meeting with your child’s tutor or one of his/her teachers to discuss any questions or concerns you may have.

*Timetables*

All students will have their personal timetable at the front of their Communication Book. At NAISAK, we encourage our students to be independent learners. As such, they must check their timetables daily so they come to school with the necessary books and equipment. Out of care for the health of their back and shoulders, we would highly recommend that only the learning materials necessary for the day are brought to school, as opposed to the totality of folders and other equipment. It teaches the students to work on their organisational skills and helps them get prepared for their learning sessions. For their Physical Education lessons, the students must wear the new PE kit that the school is introducing this year. PE bundles can be purchased through the website [www.gradesstore.com](http://www.gradesstore.com) or parents can pay by cash at the ‘Pop-up Shop’ that will be in school once per week throughout September and October. For health and safety reasons, the students must also wear trainers.

*Extra-Curricular Activities (ECAs)*

A letter will be sent home this week with details of the new ECA programme for the Autumn Term. The students will have the opportunity to attend two ECAs each week, led by our dedicated teachers or external bodies whom we have formed partnerships with this year. Although not mandatory, participation in ECAs is strongly encouraged at Secondary level as such activities allow the students to explore different fields, develop social skills and build strong supportive relationships with other adults/students in the school. Following the success of our Academic ECAs (by invitation only) last academic year, the Secondary School will aim to reiterate the offer in the Spring Term. To start with, a Reading Intervention ECA (by invitation only) will be offered in the Autumn Term. NAISAK’s ECA programme will begin on Sunday 25 September.

*Healthy Eating*

Finally, I would like to remind you that we try very hard at NAISAK to role model and encourage our students to be healthy. Eating foods that support their brain development and energy levels, and consequently their learning, is incredibly impactful on their performance. Healthy foods such as fruit, vegetables, brown bread and nuts are encouraged. Unhealthy foods, such as sweets and chocolate, fried items and sugary drinks are not allowed. It is also important to encourage your child to eat breakfast before they come to school. A good night’s sleep followed by food in the morning helps your child to concentrate and stay active and engaged at school.

I would like to thank you for entrusting us with your child’s education and I look forward to working closely with you and your family this year. As always, please do not hesitate to contact me, or your child’s tutor if you have any further questions or concerns.

Yours faithfully

Ms Lydie Gonzalès

Head of Secondary