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Dear Parents/Carers

As we approach the end of our first half-term, I wanted to take this opportunity to update you on some new initiatives we are using this academic year.

Restorative Practice

What is Restorative Practice?

Restorative Practice is a way of working with students, using positive, invitational language, to ensure they fully understand where they have made a mistake and allow them to acknowledge that there may have been a better outcome.

This allows for staff and students to 'draw a line' following an event of poor behaviour or following a disagreement amongst students and allow all to move on, while maintaining or even improving their relationships.

Restorative practice works best if things can be resolved swiftly, before an incident escalates. Sometimes, it may require support from a neutral member of staff to assist the restorative process. Restorative practice is not a 'soft' option – it is about ensuring students understand the high expectations we have of them and to help them learn from mistakes they make.

We have been using restorative practices here at school for some time, but this year we have developed this further with staff and students.

How is this being developed this year?

Restorative Practice has been relaunched with staff and students at the start of term and is being introduced effectively across the school. Throughout this year, there will be further opportunities for staff and students to receive further training to develop their proficiency.

The aim is to have a framework for staff and students to follow which helps to reduce the number of sanctions issued and allows students to consider their actions and their impact on others.

What does this mean for the students?

The main development we have adopted this year is the Restorative Meeting. Following on from an incident, students are invited to attend a Restorative Meeting to allow all parties to share their point of view, reflect on what happened and come up with a plan for moving forwards. These meetings can vary in length from 2mins to 20mins, depending on the response and they may require some action from the student.

Often these meetings may take place immediately, but there are times when this will need to be booked in at a break, lunchtime or a short session afterschool. You will see these meetings on our new electronic system booked in as 'Restorative Meetings'. If the meeting needs to take place afterschool, then they will follow the same legislation as the government provides for detentions, with at least 24 hours' notice being given to parents and carers to ensure time for families to make alternative arrangements for getting home.

It is hoped that Restorative Meetings will replace many of our traditional detentions, but it DOES NOT mean your child will never receive a detention! You will be notified when your child has either a Restorative Meeting or a detention via our new system on Class Charts. If a student fails to attend a Restorative Meeting, then they will be issued a traditional detention.

Lesson Grading

In January 2018 we trialled this system in lessons and saw such positive results that we are using it across the board this year. This is a system designed to encourage students to focus in on **learning** in lessons and to avoid other distractions. In every lesson when a student arrives they are awarded a "grade 2". At the end of the lesson the teacher adjusts the mark depending on the individual student's approach to learning throughout the lesson, using the chart below:

1	2	3	4
Outstanding use of LORIC Active engagement in learning Independent learning Outstanding effort Completion of all work – beyond expectation	Good use of LORIC Engaged in learning Good effort	Negatively affecting the learning of self or others Not giving best to the lesson	Severely, negatively affecting the learning of both self and others Removed to exit room
2 Reward Points issued	1 Reward Point issued		1 Behaviour Point issued

A reminder – What is LORIC?

LORIC relates to the core skills that we expect students to show in lessons and stands for:

- Leadership
- Organisation
- Resilience
- Initiative
- Communication

Good Learning - leads to Rewards

As you can see, students with the right ethos of learning, gain Reward Points, with Progress Leaders and Tutors able to quickly see how your child is doing each lesson. You will be receiving more information about our new Rewards System in another letter soon.

Grades are shared with your child's tutor on a daily basis and they will contact you with concerns about multiple 3's or 4's in a particular subject area. All 4's will result in a compulsory Restorative Meeting with the subject teacher and the Director of the department, prior to the child returning to the lesson. You will also see Lesson Grading reported on your child's end of term reports.

Them and Us Programme

This year all students in Years 7 to 10 will be following this programme in their tutor sessions. This is an exciting new project focusing on changing the culture of our communities. It is about helping young people understand the importance of demonstrating **kindness, showing respect and living without harm** not just to those people who are like them but also to people who are not like them. How we relate to people who do not think the same way as us, or believe the same things, is a crucial skill that needs to be taught. Thank you to many of you who completed the survey I sent out recently, I am gathering the results and designing the most specific programme for each of the year groups to follow.

Class Charts

We are currently investigating the use of some new software in school, for improving our communication with parents. We have invested in a system called Class Charts, that we currently use for our seating plans in school. We will be trialling the class charts homework module with our Sixth Form students next half-term, with the hope that it will be an effective replacement for Milk and also starting a trial using a detention monitoring module for the whole school, starting in December. If these are successful, it will mean that, as parents, you will have more information available about your child's time in school, with all of that information accessible through one app and one login. This will require an email account for set up. If you do not have access to email, please let us know. More information about this initiative will be shared as the trials draw closer.

I believe that these new developments make for an exciting year ahead and I will update you on our journey as we go. If you have any comments, or you would like to know more about one of the items mentioned above, please do not hesitate to contact me at phillips.j@mrat.co.uk

Your's faithfully

J Phillips

Mrs J Phillips
Associate Assistant Headteacher