

## School Newsletter | 15th September 2023

### A Message From Our Principal

Thank you for a positive welcome and a good start back. I took the time to introduce myself to all staff and students last week in assemblies and around site. OSCA already feels like home.

Now the hard work of continuing to improve our fabulous school begins. There is so much to feel proud of: our high expectations, honest and open conversations, calm and orderly corridors and lessons where students are engaging well with the challenge. I had a fabulous meeting with some Year 11 students this morning who told me a great deal about the positives of our academy, how we might improve further and their post 16 aims. Our young people really are a delight to be with!

### Good News

Our first couple of weeks back have been hugely successful. The new Year 7's have settled in brilliantly, as they have been actively engaging with all of their new lessons and getting to know their peers. Not only have we welcomed all of our new students, but we have also welcomed lots of new staff to the academy. Staff have been settling into their new roles, and learning all about what it means to be part of the OSCA team. It is great to see so many new faces helping to support our students. A new team that we have introduced this year at OSCA is the City Year team. City Year UK is an education charity that supports schools and young people across the UK. The City Year mentors act as student success coaches bringing extra support into our school in a unique way! As role models, the City Year mentors at OSCA will be working with students in and out of the classroom, as well as supporting / delivering extra curricular activities. Below are some quotes from the City Year mentors about settling into OSCA and how they have found working with our pupils and staff:

*"The staff are very nice and welcoming. They take their time to learn about you and make you feel part of a team. They are part of the reason I feel so comfortable and settled at OSCA in such a short time"*

*"I have found the pupils at OSCA inspiring to work with. Some pupils have shared their passions and interests for their school subjects as well as discussing their future aspirations. I look forward to the rest of this year as part of City Year and the OSCA team"*

*"I have enjoyed building relationships with the pupils and found they are already opening and sharing. They are keen to work with me as a mentor and I hope I can make a difference during this academic year"*

We feel privileged to have City Year as part of the OSCA team.



### Attendance

- 1st—Year 7
- 2nd—Year 8
- 3rd—Year 10
- 4th—Year 9
- 5th—Year 11

High attendance is vital to ensure that students reach their maximum potential while at school. Having a couple of days off here and there may not seem like it will have much of an impact, but by having just 6-10 days off a year, it can drop the chances of achieving those higher grades by 10%. This equates to over 50 hours of learning lost per year. Congratulations to Year 7 who achieved the highest attendance this week!

### Upcoming Events

#### Open Morning/Evening—26th/27th September

On Tuesday the 26th and Wednesday the 27th of September at 9-10:30am, we will be holding our annual open mornings, where visitors will be able to walk around the school to see OSCA in action. On Wednesday the 27th, we are also holding our open evening from 5-7pm. During the open evening, visitors will get a chance to get an insight into what our school offers for upcoming students for the next academic year. Each department will showcase what their curriculum looks like. Classrooms will be open for students and visitors to look around, and get involved in some fun activities so that future students can experience what is to come.

### Social Media

Don't forget to follow us on social media, where you can find any news on school activities as well as updates about recent events.



@OSCATweets



Ormiston Sandwell Community Academy

# BACK TO SCHOOL

## Online Safety Tips for Children

Wow, it's September already! The month when autumn officially starts and ... oh yeah, the beginning of a new school year. Every cloud has a silver lining though! Another term means new friends to make, different stuff to learn, fresh online trends to jump on and exciting new games to play on your phone, computer or console. We've compiled a list of our top tips to ensure that - whether you're going online to chat, research things or just have fun - you can do it safely.

### Be cautious with your profile

Be careful not to give out too much info on your social media or gaming profiles. Details like your full name, address or school's name could all help strangers to actually find you offline. A trusted adult can help you make your profiles private - so only your family and actual friends can contact you.

### Lock your devices

Taking your phone or tablet to school? Turn password protection on. It keeps your private info safe and stops anyone accessing your device without permission. Passwords should be memorable to you - but difficult for anyone else to guess. Get a trusted adult to write it down in case you forget it!

### Be smart with screen time

Too much screen time, especially just before bed, can affect your quality of sleep. Losing sleep, or not sleeping well enough, messes with your concentration and energy levels. Try muting notifications so you don't get pinged late at night: you'll feel fresher and more focused the next day.

### Know how to deal with bullies

Sadly there are people online who enjoy picking on other users. If you ever feel like you're being bullied online - by anyone, not just someone from school - talk to a trusted adult about it. Together, you can discuss possible steps, such as blocking or reporting the person who's targeting you.

### Manage online relationships wisely

Most people in a relationship chat to their partner online. Just be mindful that once you send a pic or message (even if it's private), you no longer control who else might see it. Messaging someone you've never actually met - and who might not be who they say - is definitely best avoided.

### React well to inappropriate content

When you're researching something online, there's always a chance of finding content that makes you feel uncomfortable or upset. If this happens, you can report it as inappropriate and (hopefully) get it taken down. Tell a trusted adult what happened: they'll help you decide what to do next.

### Report offensive in-game chat

If you game online with your mates, you'll know things can get competitive and heated on the in-game chat. Playing against people you don't know (especially if they're older) raises the risk of offensive comments and even threats. Our advice? Find out how to block or mute those bad losers.

### Learn to spot fake news

If you're looking into a topic for homework or a project, be careful not to get taken in by fake news: content that's deliberately created to mislead people. Check the story with credible sources, like the BBC or Sky News. Trust your instincts, too - if it seems too unbelievable to be true, it's probably fake.

### Keep it 'real' with online friends

Everyone enjoys adding friends and followers on social media. It's important, though, that the people you interact with online really are your friends. If they're just random people you've connected with to increase your contacts, you don't know if they could be trolls or bullies (or worse).

