Dear Parent or Carer,

We have had an excellent start to the school year. A number of students have already achieved an impressive number of Achievement Points, and it is great to read so many positive comments about students’ contributions to their time at Norwood, so early on in the school year.

All students have been taken through our Student Handbook in order to understand our rules and expectations, and the importance of demonstrating respect, integrity and courtesy in their interactions with others. We are also incredibly proud of students’ excellent uniform and their smart appearance, and would ask you to support us in ensuring your child maintains this over the course of the school year.

As we begin to settle into the new academic year, I would like to draw your attention to a number of aspects of school life:

**Uniform**

We have made our expectations for uniform and appearance clear, and all students have a copy of the Student Handbook which details these expectations. Please click [here](#) to access the Student Handbook on the school’s website.

As the weather changes, I would like to remind you of our expectations for coats:

- Hoodies are not permitted and should not be brought into the school site, or worn to and from school.
- A dark overcoat should be worn (either black, dark blue or dark grey in colour, and not khaki green). A small logo is permitted.
- Coats should not be worn inside the school building.
- Hoods on coats are only to be worn outside and during inclement weather. They should not be worn at any other time.
- Winter scarves should be plain black. ‘Blanket’ style scarves, either checked or plain, are not permitted.
- Balaclavas, du-rags and face masks are not permitted.

Please also be aware that students are allowed one small stud in the lower part of each/either ear. Nose piercings or other facial piercings are not allowed. If a student has more than one small stud in each/either ear, or any other facial piercing, they will be told to remove them immediately. Students’ hair should be a natural colour, and if a student has different coloured hair they will be sent home to rectify this.

**Emotional Health and Well-Being**

If you or your child are concerned about bullying, we have introduced a section on our website where a concern can be reported about a student at Norwood. This form is confidential and can be completed anonymously. Any entry on here will be dealt with seriously and sensitively, and should be used appropriately. As always, if there is a concern about a child in danger or immediate harm, the
police should be contacted. The ‘Report Bullying’ facility on the school's website is in the ‘Parents’ section, under ‘Behaviour and Safety’.

Whilst we will signpost students and their families to external agencies, you can access additional support for your child at the Well Centre in Streatham. The Well Centre is a youth health centre where a young person can see a youth worker, counsellor or doctor to discuss health concerns or worries in a safe and confidential space. Details of this service can be found at www.thewellcentre.org

Students can also use the ‘ChatHealth’ service for confidential advice and support on 07507332150. ChatHealth is a messaging service for young people to get confidential advice about health related issues. It’s for young people attending school or living in Lambeth and Southwark aged 11-19 years. Details of this service can be found at www.evelinalondon.nhs.uk/chathealth

There is also www.kooth.com offering free, safe and anonymous online counselling support for young people. This service is accredited by the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy and the NHS.

Please be aware that as a school we will deal with issues affecting our students when they are inside school. If serious incidents take place outside school, it is important that they are reported to the police. We work closely with our Safer Schools Officer regarding issues outside school. Please be advised that the police non-emergency number (101) is the number to call when you want to contact your local police. You should call 101 to report crime and other concerns that do not require an emergency response. You should always call 999 when it is an emergency, such as when a crime is in progress, someone suspected of a crime is nearby, when there is danger to life or when violence is being used or threatened.

Use of Mobile Phones and Social Media outside school

We continue to be concerned as a school about students’ use of social media and their mobile phones. In an attempt to ensure that children feel safe, when your child joined Norwood we provided you with information regarding social media and the dangers of the use of certain websites and phone applications as part of our ICT Safer Use Contract (E-Safety Advice and Rules for Responsible ICT, Data Use and Mobile Phones) and continue to reinforce these messages in assemblies and form time.

We want your child to be safe and ask for your support in ensuring they are using their mobile phone appropriately. We often have to deal with issues in school that might have come about as a result of a conversation on Whatsapp or when particular messages have been posted on social media platforms like Snapchat or Instagram. This communication is happening outside school, usually in the family home and often late at night, at weekends or in the school holidays. We refer concerns about the use of social media and mobile phones directly to the police, as it is happening outside of school. Students often make themselves vulnerable through their use of social media, and we continue to advise families to ensure students remove these platforms and apps in order to ensure their emotional health and well-being. The school is not responsible for mobile phone or social media infringements that take place outside of school hours.
Please regularly check your child’s phone, look through their photos and messages, and talk with them about their safety online. The O2 and NSPCC Net Aware website (www.net-aware.org.uk) provides detailed information about social media and enables parents to stay up to date with new apps. They also provide a free helpline for parents if you have a question about parental controls or a concern about a social network your child uses, with expert advisors to help. Please call 08088005002. In addition to this, the ‘Think U Know’ website also provides helpful guidance and support to parents (www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents).

**Travelling to and from school**

As the winter sets in and it becomes dark earlier, it is of particular importance that students are mindful of their travel plans. We encourage you to be explicit with your child about the time you expect them to be home from school and the route and/or mode of transport they should take (for example, the 432 bus). We will continue to stress and emphasise the importance of students going straight home. We have made it clear to students in assemblies, form time and in the Student Handbook the expectations we have for their conduct outside school, as detailed in our Behaviour Policy:

*Students should promptly make their way home at the end of the school day. Unless a student is attending an after school club, using the Library, or attending a detention, we expect students to leave the school site by 3pm and be on their way home. We have increasing concern about students’ safety outside school. We advise students not to go to Norwood Park, or to wait and congregate at Crown Point or in Crystal Palace, or outside fast food outlets. We expect parents to ensure their children are home as quickly as possible. Students should take direct routes home, and not divert through local housing estates.*

Please continue to discuss these expectations with your child, and talk with your child about keeping themselves safe. As always, the safety of our students is of paramount importance.

We would also ask you to ensure that your child has a Transport for London 11-15 Zip Oyster photocard, or a 16+ Zip Oyster photocard. Although a number of students walk to school, we frequently use free public transport on school trips and visits, and require students to have a Zip Card. It is their responsibility to be in possession of their Zip Card and to ensure they have this for any school journey. A student’s travel arrangements to and from school are the responsibility of parents or carers; please ensure your child has the Zip Card.

We have also been advised by a number of parents that they have downloaded the Life360 app on their child’s mobile phone in order to know the whereabouts of their child outside of school hours. This is a family networking app designed to allow family members to share location with each other. A number of families use this in order to check when their child arrives at school in the morning, and when they arrive home in the afternoon (particularly when other family members might be absent from the family home).
Attendance and punctuality

We expect students to maintain excellent attendance and punctuality. Students should be in school every day by 8.25am in order to register at 8.40am. Breakfast Club is open from 8am. In most situations, if a student leaves home just 15 minutes earlier, they would arrive on time. We recognise that in the local area there are often roadworks and maintenance that take place, causing congestion and delay, however, students must take responsibility for their travel to school and allow for extra time in order to manage these challenges. At the moment there are major works taking place on Norwood Road affecting travel from Brixton and local roads, as well as temporary traffic lights on other routes to the school. We closely monitor students’ punctuality. We are required to refer to a student’s punctuality in academic references for sixth forms, colleges and universities, as well as sharing this information with employers; students must be aware that their punctuality now will remain on their school record. Being punctual is a very basic life skill, and lateness is not acceptable in any setting. Now your child is of secondary school age we would expect them to take increasing responsibility for their punctuality and arrival to school, but please support them in managing their time in the morning and ensuring they leave home with plenty of time to get to school.

If there is a concern about a student’s attendance or punctuality, the school will follow Lambeth’s guidance and issue standard letters and warnings. This is in line with Lambeth policy.

After school detentions

As you’re aware, students may be kept back after school for a detention if they have not met our expectations as a school. We have a number of systems in place in order to ensure the school day is not affected by students’ poor behaviour or behaviour that negatively impacts learning. As well as detentions class teachers or faculties might issue, we also have whole-school detentions. These include:
 - a daily Late Detention for students who are late to school that day (we are mindful of local issues that might affect travel and adjust these accordingly)
 - a daily Parking Detention for students who have disrupted a lesson
 - a daily Corridor Detention for poor behaviour on corridors
 - a weekly Late to Lessons Detention on a Thursday for students who are persistently late to lessons over the course of the previous week

If students fail to attend detentions, they will be given an extended Senior Leadership Team Detention on a Friday for two hours, and if this is not attended further sanctions will be applied.

Communication

Finally, if you wish to speak to a member of staff at the school, please be advised that they will not always be able to respond to your request immediately or meet with you if you come to the school requesting an impromptu meeting. All staff at the school have a number of commitments within their roles that mean they are unable to see parents or carers without prior arrangement. We ask visitors to the school to complete a form in Reception, where you can leave a particular message for a member of staff or request to make an appointment; staff will then do their best to accommodate any requests.
Please be aware that whilst we recognise that parents or carers visiting, phoning, or emailing the school can become emotional when addressing concerns related to their child, staff will not engage in or continue to communicate if parents or carers present as abusive, aggressive or accusatory.

We put great emphasis on the role of the Form Tutor at Norwood. They are the main point of contact for a student and their family, and we would encourage parents and carers to liaise with Form Tutors regarding any concerns they might have in relation to their child. This might include issues relating to attendance and punctuality, their academic progress and achievement, as well as their emotional health and well-being. Each year group is led by a Head of Year, supported by at least one Deputy Head of Year, who work closely with the Form Tutors in their team. If there are specific queries or concerns in relation to a subject, these should be communicated to the subject teacher in the first instance and then the Head of Department or Faculty. Contact information can be found in the Contact Us section on the school's website.

Thank you for taking the time to read this email. Please discuss its contents with your child.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours faithfully,

Mr Harvey
Deputy Headteacher