



ROBERT OWEN ACADEMY

Robert Owen Academy

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15 November 2016

Dear Parents

As the result of the recent protests, adverse publicity on social media, in the press and on local radio we believe that it is important to put the record straight, address factual inaccuracies and set out the correct position which is simple and uncomplicated.

We wrote to you previously explaining the Financial Notice to Improve Letter which has been on the Academy website since publication in June 2016. We were under no requirement or obligation to inform you of this but we operate an open and transparent system of governance and we wanted you to have the necessary re-assurances. What we couldn't give you then were the details of the re-structuring which were brought about by the Financial Notice to Improve because in the interests of individual employees we needed to protect their rights. You will appreciate that as this involves employment law aspects the details are sensitive and confidential. We have been and continue to work closely with the trade unions and we wish to be a good employer at all times.

Addressing the current position, which should be the matter of great celebration, we have a fantastically dedicated group of professional staff who are so deeply committed to each of your children that across the board from the Principal down they have each voluntarily taken a significant cut in pay. They have agreed to this so that effective provision can continue smoothly and without a break. Candidly our staff are heroes and we should be counting our blessings as to how lucky we are to have them. As public servants they are committed to you and your child and their actions are selfless to an inspiring degree.

What they have received in return from a small section of parents and their children was abuse, threats, harassment, accusations of corruption, favouritism and downright untruths much of which have been posted in very public places. The hurt of our staff is our hurt as Trustees and Governors and it will not surprise you to know that we have now appointed specialist legal advisers to deal with this. Our priority is to protect the good reputation of our staff, our students and our Academy. This we intend to do without fear or favour.

As parents we want you to be re-assured that it is very much business as usual. New staff have been appointed and this process is going forward on a daily basis. We are impressed with the quality of staff who want to come and work with us to fill the small number of vacancies and to strengthen provision. Your child's academic, technical and vocational education will continue without hindrance or diminution.

We now ask for your wholehearted support and co-operation going forward. The unfortunate all day action by sixteen students last Friday has brought complaints from the general public about dangerous and unruly behaviour. It was unfortunate but understandable that on Remembrance Day some observers also viewed it as disrespectful to the fallen. However, the students had refused to register in the Academy, their parents were briefed by telephone so the responsibility for their actions remains with

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INNOVATION

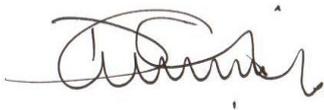
CO-OPERATION

each individual and their parents. Should there be a repeat of the action we will ask for police involvement. Also each student needs to reflect on the fairness and legality of publicly calling for the sacking of the Principal who is highly regarded by us as Trustees and Governors and by the Ofsted monitoring of the Academy. Mr Hubble has rights in law and students and those who advise them have responsibilities.

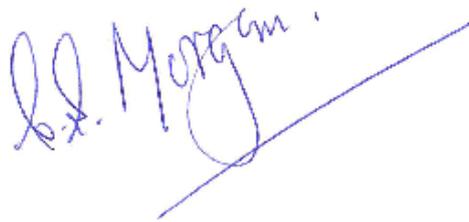
Our Robert Owen Academy is a brave new experiment in technical and vocational education with many individual successes to proclaim. The sort of very public behaviour we are currently witnessing from a minority can only weaken our credibility in the community and with that the individual reputations of our much valued students.

We would like to thank without reservation those parents who have contacted us to offer support and to those who have publicly challenged the vilification of our dedicated staff.

Yours in co-operation,



Deborah Gittoes
Chair of Governing Body



Christopher Morgan
Chair of the Trust