



16th January 2024

Dear Parents & Carers

I wanted to share another message that I spoke to the students about in assemblies at the start of the term. I highlighted that when they leave school, they will be competing for university courses, apprenticeships and jobs with students who have been to other schools and that will include children who have been to private schools where their parents may have paid as much as £40,000 a year to send their child.

What they will have, and I want all our students to have, is the confidence to interact confidently with anyone and in any situation. But, the fact that they are able to do that is not down to any attribute that they are born with – no, it is because they have learnt, as our children can, how to do that.

As I have explained, one of the things we are working on to help support the success of all students, is trying to clearly define what we mean when we use terms like 'polite and respectful' (for example saying thank you, excuse me and please the TEP of steps that I have shared before now) and being more confident in the way we communicate.

I have shared a way of clearly defining what that involves, with the students at the start of this term using another acronym – this time **SHAPE**.

To help develop your confidence as communicators and set you up to compete successfully in life beyond school At Warlingham we encourage you to:-

- Use full **S**entences
- Keep **H**ands out of our pockets and away from our mouths when we speak
- **A**rticulate our words clearly
- **P**roject our voice confidently
- And we make **E**ye contact with the person we are talking to or our audience

When I met with parents at the parent forum in the Autumn term there was a misconception that this was a disciplinary tool for the school to use to punish students that get this wrong or find it difficult. That is definitely not the case, rather this is a teaching tool to help those students who get it wrong know to understand more clearly what we are aiming for, how to correct and practice, so they can get better and more confident whatever the starting point.

If when we are seeking to help students and remind them of this and they are rude and dismissive of the need for this, it can lead to the school having to address that, but these simple definitions of what we are aiming for are to help students and set them up for success at school and in life, with the confidence to compete with anybody.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P Foster', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

Mr P Foster

Headteacher