

Friday 8th July 2016

Dear Parents/Carers,

Re: Assault on a Phoenix student this week

I imagine that most of you will be aware of the assault of one of our students on Monday. Having met with him yesterday, I can confirm that the student who was assaulted is now safe and well.

The press and social media interest in the incident has been considerable and sometimes extremely inappropriate. I thought it important to write and provide you with as much detail as I am able to share regarding this disgraceful behaviour by a small group of our students.

The incident occurred during the lunchtime on Monday of this week, when a number of students attacked one of their peer group. This was an isolated incident that involved a small group of boys who, I understand, have been friends in the past. The incident was videoed by another student and was stopped by one of our elder students. Given its seriousness, we have involved the Police and the Local Authority to help resolve the matter and assemblies have been held with all students to brief them of the incident and to reiterate our expectations of them.

I have spoken with the student who broke up the fight, thanking him for his swift and brave action. I fully intend to recognise his actions at our achievement awards ceremony next week. This young man is a credit to our school and more typical of the 1550 students that attend Phoenix to study.

I would like to reassure you that the students involved in the incident are not attending school at the moment. They will not be allowed to do so until our investigation has been completed and I have decided what action to take. In making that decision my first priority will be to ensure that Phoenix is a safe school for your children to attend; a standard that I will never compromise on.

I have spent most of today 'walking' the school talking to students and teachers about the events of this week. Like the staff and myself, our students are shocked, appalled and disgusted at what has happened and are keen to disassociate themselves from this kind of behaviour. One child said to me "why would one person do that to another?"

Phoenix is known for its good behaviour and high standards and it is important that we do not allow the conduct of a small number of students to tarnish that reputation. If you had observed the behaviour of our students around the site like I have today, you would be incredibly proud of them; they are exemplary! We need to remember that Phoenix is a school of 1550 students, the majority of whom would never dream of acting aggressively towards their peers.

Should you wish to contact the school regarding this issue, our leadership, pastoral teams and myself will be available to take your calls.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours faithfully



Gary Hill

Head teacher