

Gartree High School

Ridgeway, Oadby, Leicester, LE2 5TQ



8th September 2017

Dear parents and carers,

Leicestershire schools have always started the autumn term earlier than most. This week there has been much talk in the media of going back to school and the new term. However, it is all systems go here – our PE GCSE students were at Loughborough University last week. They had a superb day at the School Games at Loughborough University. Not only did the students get to see world class performances from some of the UK's top young athletes, but they also took part in some fascinating GCSE workshops led by top specialists including Sports Science fitness testing, Strength and Conditioning and Sports Nutrition. This was a truly unique and inspiring opportunity for Gartree students to see a world class university.

Trials for some of our sports teams have taken place this week, including Year 7 and Year 8 boys' football and the girls' netball teams. Girls' football training has also commenced. Our students really enjoy inter-school matches and competitions. Our fixtures start in the week beginning 18th September. Competition can be fierce and our team certainly go all out to win!

In school we try to balance competitiveness and friendly rivalry with collaboration and team spirit. In life, enjoying both of these is important. Students show varying degrees of competitive spirit and it is heartening to see how many of our students strive to be the best. Disappointments and setbacks are inevitable in schools, as in life, so it is also important that our students learn how to meet these calmly, how to learn from setbacks and how to bounce back and try again.

Some level of competition is healthy and we use this in our house system and in sport. What is less helpful to young people is comparison. The key is to embrace that we are all different and have different strengths. Competition within a supportive environment in which a young person can learn to fail is vital. In addition, those born competitors need to learn how to lose with grace and respect. There is no easy answer, I'm afraid, just reassurance that at Gartree we try to balance this carefully by giving opportunities to all and equipping students to walk confidently into the world. It is the heart of what we do: "Aspiring to personal excellence in a supportive community."

Support at fixtures is always welcome.

Have a great weekend.

Your sincerely,

Sonia Singleton
Headteacher

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