Dear parent and pupil

I am delighted to write to you to invite you to attend our Open College week at Thomas Estley Community College. This is the first official step in your journey towards becoming a full member of our Thomas Estley family. This week over 90% of last year’s Year Six learners in our catchment feeder schools in Broughton Astley and Cosby joined our incoming Year Seven, and we also welcomed over half of the learners from our dual catchment schools in Whetstone (who share a joint catchment of Thomas Estley and Countesthorpe Leysland), as well as students from out of catchment who chose to apply for Thomas Estley and filled up our few remaining spaces.

Some of our new Year Seven learners practising their observational drawing skills this week

We are proud of our Thomas Estley ethos and community, well established as a beacon of inclusion, innovation and excellence in learning within Leicestershire. We are the only secondary school in Leicestershire to be an accredited national teaching school, due to the high quality of our teaching and learning, and we have worked hard through our recent transition to 11-16 to ensure that this translates to great progress at GCSE. You can find more about outside views of the college and its achievements at http://www.thomasestley.org.uk/parents/ofsted-report/

Year Eleven hone their skills in Astrophysics and Drama this week in preparation for their GCSEs
We believe that success in academic areas, although crucial to ensure future success, is not the only important feature of college life, and our vision and values, created by our students and staff, perfectly describe our purpose:

**Community of courage and commitment to success**

Aiming to **achieve our best**.
Taking full advantage of every **learning opportunity**.
Showing **resilience** through our experiences and challenges.
Seeking out our **talents** and following our dreams.
Reaching out for opportunities to **lead and encourage others**.
Making a **positive difference** and celebrating success.
Including the **whole community**, sharing, caring and giving time as needed.
Treating each other with **kindness, fairness and respect**.
Finding space in our lives for **fun, joy, praise and laughter**.

Our sporting achievements at local, county and national level, are second to no other local state school, and we prioritise a wealth of opportunities for students to develop their talents and try our new experiences, in the arenas of musical and dramatic performance, mathematical and scientific excellence, linguistic and artistic skills, and a whole range of other residential, enrichment and extra-curricular opportunities.

Leadership is at the heart of our curriculum, from our Year Nine Specialisms curriculum to ongoing opportunities for all year groups to take part in SSAT leadership projects and national accreditation, and we have recently developed relationships with the Sea Cadets and a Duke of Edinburgh offer. We are proud to have our students volunteer within our community college preschool and retired community provision, the wider community, the National Citizenship scheme, and a range of fundraising events for our linked partners in Malawi as well as local charities.

*Raising money for Malawi and the college community day; leading primary and preschool events*
Open College week consists of two elements:

- Bookable tours during the college day to see a real-life, typical day view of our college life and lessons (9:00-10:15 or 11:00-12:15 on September 13 & 14). Book by ringing reception on 01455 283263 or email patotheprincipal@thomasestley.org.uk, stating which tour you would like to attend and whether you wish to bring your child (permission to miss lessons must be granted by their primary school).

- Open Evening on Wednesday September 13 7:00-8:30pm, with a chance to hear more information about the college and to visit subject areas to investigate them in more detail, with plenty of changes to ask questions. Book by ringing reception on 01455 283263 or email patotheprincipal@thomasestley.org.uk, stating numbers attending.

You can also find out more about the college by visiting our website www.thomasestley.org.uk or our Facebook page www.facebook.com/Thomasestley If you ‘like’ our Facebook page you will receive a few posts each week with pictures of college life and information about our students’ achievements and experiences.

The application round for secondary school places closes on October 31; please ensure that you have applied for a place in time. We are generally oversubscribed and the local authority gives priority to applications arriving before the deadline. Full details about the local authority based Admissions policy can be found on our website and you can apply at https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools-colleges-and-academies/school-admissions/apply-for-a-secondary-school-place

Senior leaders from the college will visit your child’s school; in most cases we send a representative to the Autumn Year Six Parents Evening and we also visit with student transition leaders in the summer term, before your children join us in the last week of term for Induction. There are also other opportunities for children to familiarise themselves with the college, through a range of family of schools events or specific targeted opportunities. If you have any questions or concerns we welcome contact from our families even before their children start at Thomas Estley. Once your place has been confirmed with us (usually March 1st) we will write to you with more information and to welcome you officially into our Thomas Estley family.

We look forward to meeting you soon and wish you the best meanwhile in your primary studies; particularly the current Year Six as they work hard to prepare for their SATs. I hope that my favourite football quote, from Pele, helps you to focus on achieving your best whilst reminding you about the importance of happiness in your life: ‘Success is no accident. It is hard work, perseverance, learning, studying, sacrifice, and most of all, love of what you are doing or learning to do’.

Yours faithfully,

Mandi Collins, Principal