



21<sup>st</sup> July 2022

Dear Parent / Carer

As we approach the very end of the academic year, I wanted to write to you to offer some thanks, share some news and signpost you to a few key pieces of information for September.

The school has had a busy and challenging year. To name but a few, we have had an inspection, dealt with the continued fluctuation of the infection rates, resumed formal examinations as well as seen a return to trips, visits and enrichment. All of this has been made easier by the tremendous efforts and resilience of our student body of whom we are so proud. I hope for them that they have a relaxing, safe and enjoyable summer break. A guide to staying safe in the summer has been produced by Mrs Barber and is in the latest parent bulletin.

Firstly, as happens at the end of every year, we are saying farewell to a number of staff. In Maths, we are waving goodbye to Mr Lee, Mr Marsh and Miss Collins; in English Ms Loudon and Ms Green are departing, Mr Brown in Social Science, Mr Minghella in Computing, Ms Steer in MFL, Miss Ponting in RE, in Science Miss Jenkins and Miss Godfrey, Mrs Henderson in Music, and from the House team Miss Walsh and Mrs Power. Without picking on anyone, we also have to give a special mention to Mrs Dobson and Mr Neal who between them have given 65 years to the school. We wish all of these leavers the very best with their pastures new, whether it be retirement, promotion or a new career. All of their work, however long, is appreciated. Needless to say, we have been working hard at recruitment over the last few months and all our new staff have been into school for induction and will be joining us from September.

Examination results are being released in the summer as per 2019 and all of the details regarding the receipt of results and support for next steps will be sent to parents. I wish every single student the very best of luck with their results in the summer and I hope to see many back in the sixth form. We are always here, even for those not staying, and can support with decision making. We also really like to hear about next steps so please do let us know your stories.

Term begins again on 5<sup>th</sup> September for year 7s and 12s with a return to school for everyone else on 6<sup>th</sup>. A new term is always a good moment to remind everyone of our uniform policy and all of the details can be found on the website. A number of parents have asked for clarity on shoes, especially when a number of shoe shops are selling Nike trainers under the 'school shoe' section. We do not allow these branded trainers, even if they are black. We ask for students to wear a traditional black shoe and I would add that these are far cheaper than branded trainers with 'air bubbles' in! A reminder also that we do have shorts as part of the uniform if students would prefer, especially in hot weather.

You will know that we have changed our mobile device policy this year, following consultation with parents, students and staff. I have to tell you that it has been so successful, with no phones being confiscated this last week and students sitting and chatting with their friends, face to face. This obviously will continue into the next academic year but we are looking to provide some spaces at lunch and break for students wanting a quiet area.



The inspection this year was a real highlight for me as it celebrated so many areas of our school. My favourite quote, if I am allowed to have one, is:

*'In this supportive and celebratory environment, pupils treat each other with dignity and respect and feel encouraged and empowered to be the best person that they can be.'*

It encapsulates everything that we try to do – ensuring the environment is a safe place for students, one in which we acknowledge all their achievements and one where the students are at the heart of maintaining a respectful community. I hope you are as happy with the findings as we are. However, we do not always get it right and I am committed to listening to you and addressing your concerns if you have them. There are many ways to communicate with the school, via email or phone, and meetings can be arranged if needed. You too have a role in making sure our children flourish and my experience tells me that this is most successful when we work together. I look forward to continuing that partnership next year.

For now, it just remains for me to wish you a very happy summer break. If you are getting away, I hope that these plans are not scuppered by any strike action. If you are not getting away, I hope the weather holds for you and you have an opportunity to enjoy family time. Thank you for all of the support you have shown us over this year.

Best wishes.

Kind regards

Tim Farrer  
Headteacher