



Our Ref : SPP/JET
17 December 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

At this time of year I usually send out my end of term Headteacher letter celebrating the numerous enrichment events and activities that have gone on at our school throughout this autumn term. In these unprecedented and challenging times this letter takes on a wholly different flavour as our priority throughout this term has been keeping all our community safe from the virus and ensuring that both pastoral support and academic provision, whether in school or remote learning, has been adapted to suit the needs of all our students and to the conditions in which we have to work in. Further to this many of our planned events and celebrations have been sadly curtailed.

It is safe to say that this term has been a steep learning curve for us all and I am extremely grateful for the resilience and dedication of all our staff, the ability of our student population to adapt to such challenging circumstances and the subsequent rules and regulations we need to impose upon them and to you, parents and carers, for your support and understanding throughout this term.

As we approach the end of term you will all be aware that from Friday 18 December we revert to a remote learning model and every student will be issued with a 3-day timetable to follow from home. We have enforced the message that engagement in learning is to continue until the end of Tuesday 22 December. The timetable is designed to deliver a blend of live lessons and set tasks so as to provide a variety of tasks including physical activity and to ensure that no student is working at a computer/electronic device screen for a whole day.

Sadly, for a significant number of our students, term has ended early due to having to self-isolate as contacts of positive cases. For many, their learning has been disrupted on more than one occasion this term due to self-isolation and I sympathise with and share the frustrations of each of those students and their families as they desperately want to be in school. I am also conscious of the anxiety the pandemic has caused for so many in our school community, particularly as we approach the Christmas break. I can only assure you that we continue to be wholly committed to providing the wraparound care required during such worrying times and will endeavour to do all we can to support our families as we journey together towards what we pray will be a more optimistic spring and summer.

We return to school for the spring term on 6 January 2021. For our Sixth Form and Year 11 students mock examinations will take place shortly after their return to school. Post 16 mock examinations take place during week beginning 11 January and Year 11 mock examinations week beginning 18 January. For these students there will be some revision to be undertaken during their break but it is vitally important that they schedule this revision so as to ensure the important rest and relaxation they need. On that note, a reminder that for students lower down school we do not set homework during holiday periods as this is an opportunity for them to take a well-deserved break from academic rigour and spend quality time, where possible, with family and friends.

Speaking of family and friends, I will end by wishing each and every one of you a safe and joyous Christmas. Although we may not all have the opportunity to be surrounded by family and friends this year, I sincerely hope that the joy and wonder of this special feast brings hope and optimism to us all as we look towards the New Year. Again, I would like to thank you for your continued support of our school and particularly to those of you who have sent messages of thanks and good wishes to our staff. Such messages have provided a much needed morale boost and are very much appreciated.

May God bless you and bring joy and comfort to you this Christmas

Yours sincerely



S P Pender
Headteacher