

12th September 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

Headteacher's Letter 1

Those of you with a child at the school last year will have become accustomed to receiving circular letters from me, usually introducing yet another implication of the COVID-19 pandemic. These are in addition to the weekly newsletters and galleries of students' work and achievements.

This year I will continue to write from time to time, but I trust the themes will be different. This week I am simply summarising some impressions of the first week in a new school year.

The initial lateral flow testing is over and we are able to settle down to our core business: teaching our classes and re-establishing our values and expectations. Year 8 are settling in well and overall I have been pleased with the reports of purposeful attitudes from across the school. It has certainly been a relief to bring larger groups together in assemblies. In the coming week there will be our first House assemblies; we have already got some inter house activities under way. (We used to treat such things as routine, but the very restricted regime of recent months has reminded us of how important they are.) The tutors and the Heads of House, of course, remain your normal first point of contact with the school.

COVID has, needless to say, not gone away. To my knowledge we have 15 students away after positive test results, some from our own tests and some following tests in the final week of the holiday. They are distributed like this: Year 12: 1 absentee, Year 11: 6 absentees, Year 10: 4 absentees, Year 9: 2 absentees and Year 8: 2 absentees. There is also one member of staff who is away after testing positive.

We are maintaining a flow of fresh air in the classrooms as best we can and continuing to move around along routes outside the buildings where ever this is possible. Hand sanitising and our own more intensive cleaning routines continue to be important.

I am disappointed that we are still waiting for the hoodies which we promised to the members of Year 8 who attended the summer school. We hope to be distributing them without much more delay.

A more predictable disappointment is the news that the £2,000,000 programme to replace some of windows and flat roofs will not begin until the spring. Then money is committed; the delay comes from bottlenecks in the supply of materials.

Finally, I am pleased to introduce several new members of staff. They are:

- Jill Price Science teacher
- Samantha Ruse MFL teacher
- Maisie Truman Maths teacher
- Sam Butterfield Learning Support Assistant
- Katie Reynolds MFL teacher
- Laura Quiney Maths teacher
- Lois Resoun RE/PSHE teacher
- Claire Whitsey Learning Support Assistant

- Jenny Taylor Learning Support Assistant
- Rachel Whittaker English teacher
- Elaine Law Catering Assistant
- Laura Harrington Maths teacher
- Jodie Pritchard Catering Assistant
- Samuel Snell Science teacher

Yours sincerely,



Natalie Waters