

16 July 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

And so we come to the end of another busy year, one made all the more so by the pandemic. I should like to take this opportunity to thank all of you for your support, understanding and patience. I appreciate that things may not have been easy for you, especially those who have been directly affected by the virus or indirectly by having to self-isolate.

I am sure you understand that track and trace systems have been dictated to us by the Government, and that this has added to the significant pressure we have been under; I should like to pay tribute here to our fantastic administrative / reception staff who have gone well beyond the call of duty on this front. It is also largely down to them that we managed to remain open for as long as we did, curb the spread of the virus and, ultimately, save lives. My recent decision to close the school was a last resort; with many of our staff being at breaking point, and with the virus spreading rapidly, I felt I had no choice. Again, I am sorry to those it inconvenienced.

We say goodbye to a number of staff this term:

- Mr Fitt (long-standing teacher of Technology and Computing) has kindly taken voluntary redundancy. He has been with us since 1998 and was a reliable second in department for much of his time. From a personal perspective, I will be sad to see him leave – he communicated particularly well with pupils and I enjoyed observing many of his lessons when I line managed the department.
- Mrs Smith (Exams Officer) is retiring. She has overseen all matters relating to school exams, invigilation, exam concessions and special considerations, results and appeals with a great eye for detail, such that the annual JCQ inspection of our processes and procedures always leads to a clean sheet with ticks in all the boxes. We are grateful for the consistency and quality of her work, and have relied upon her expertise to get the job done successfully.
- Miss Wilson (teacher of PE and Head of Year) is moving to QEGS. She has been a fine teacher and Head of Year and we are very sad indeed that she is moving on to pastures new.
- Miss Bailey (Acting Head of History) is moving on to become Head of History at Netherhall. Although Miss Bailey has not been with us for long, she has made a real impact (both as a teacher and Staff Governor) and we wish her the very best in her new and demanding role.
- Mrs Thwaite (Pastoral Assistant) is stepping down.
- Mrs Peacock (peripatetic music teacher) is focussing on her work in Keswick.

In addition, the following staff have come to the end of their maternity covers:

- Miss Selden (Teacher of History)
- Mr Hill (Teacher of History)
- Ms Fletcher (Teacher of RE and Sociology)

We wish all of these teachers the very best in the next stage of their lives.

A number of changes have been made to the Pastoral Team, which will take effect when Mrs Puskar and Miss Southwell go on maternity leave in the autumn and as we say goodbye to Miss L Wilson.

Staff taking on new roles in September include:

- Mrs Puskar (Teacher of MFL and Assistant HoY) has been appointed as the new Head of Year 8 from September 2022 (Mrs Puskar is going on maternity leave in October)

- Mr Plackett (Teacher of PE) will be the temporary Head of Year 11 from September 2021
- Mr Irving (Teacher of Science) will be the temporary Assistant Head of KS3 from September 2021
- Mr Schultz (Assistant Head of Year 7) will become temporary Head of Year 9 to cover Miss Southwell's maternity leave
- Mrs Thorpe (Pastoral Assistant) will become Assistant Head of Year 7
- Mr Speakman (Learning Support TA) will become the KS4 Pastoral Assistant

Other changes include:

- Mr Walker (Assistant Head, Teaching and Learning) has been promoted to Deputy Head from September
- Miss Corcoran has been appointed as a History Teacher (to replace Miss Bailey)
- Miss Hanabury (Maths TA) will become the new Exams Officer
- Mrs Tyrrell-Forster ('Bank' Cover Supervisor) will become the Maths TA
- Mrs Walker-Munn ('Bank' Cover and Mid-day Supervisor) will be supervising the IER and covering some TA work in Learning Support
- Mrs Hudson (teacher of History)'s maternity leave comes to an end and she will be returning on 1<sup>st</sup> September.

The Government has informed schools that **ALL pupils (except the new Year 7s) have to be tested (using lateral flow tests) AT HOME, on the night before they return to school.** I imagine you still have enough test kits, and can keep one aside for your child in readiness for September. But if you have run out, spare test kits can be collected from school at the following times:

- Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> August (for Year 11s only, as this is their results day)
- Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> August 10am-12pm (any year group)
- Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> August 10am-12pm (any year group)

**IMPORTANT:**

As things stand, arrangements for pupils returning to school in September are as follows:

- **Year 7s ONLY on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> September**
- **Year 7s, 8s, 12s, and 13s ONLY on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> September**
- **ALL PUPILS on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> September (and for the remainder of the term)**

**All pupils with consent will LFD-test on their first day back in school, supervised by NTS staff.**

**Our understanding is that we can refer to previous consent forms to determine which children are to be tested. We will be sending consent forms for new Year 7s and all those who have started with us since January via ParentMail during the holidays. We will be sending a ParentMail message during the holidays to ask for pupils names who have recently tested positive (within the last 90 days), as these children will not be included in the testing process in September.**

Finally, a word about our pupils, your children. Since the end of the most recent lockdown, I have been in awe of them and for so many reasons. By and large, behaviour has been immaculate, uniform likewise (many insisted on wearing their ties despite there being no compulsion according

to the 'summer dress' rules), and they have been remarkably buoyant and upbeat, all things considered. Indeed, it is in part their smiling faces and willingness to say a cheery 'Hi, sir!' that has kept me going in these difficult times. They all deserve a well-earned rest this summer; I do hope we can look forward to happier times.

Please do keep an eye on ParentMail over the summer. Much of the detail about arrangements in September has yet to filter through to school leaders, and we do anticipate some changes to our current plans before we start in September.

Thank you again for your support and have a wonderful summer!

Kind regards,

Mr DS Northwood

Headmaster