



28th May 2021

Dear Parent/ Carer

Year 11

We say goodbye to Year 11 today with a mixture of sadness and excitement. On a personal note, I have only known them for five terms and during that period, a substantial amount of their time has been spent out of school. Having said that, I have always been impressed by their commitment and their sense of humour. As the new principal, arriving at short notice in 2019, I will always be grateful for their support and know that my colleagues who have seen them mature over the past 5 years will feel sad when they leave. Although they will not be in school as before, they will soon be moving on to new exciting opportunities. We really hope to see them all for their leavers' assembly on 24th June followed by their prom on 25th June.

Changes after half term

There are some changes taking place for the remaining students after half term. All parents of students affected by any significant change have been contacted personally, but I want to ensure that everyone knows what we are doing.

As a result of our Year 11 cohort leaving, there will be a change of year group key stage bubbles. Years 9 and 10 will be classed as Key Stage 4 and Year 7 and Year 8 will remain as Key Stage 3.

Following the guidance, and in line with our own risk assessments, we will be holding live assemblies again which will happen as below:

- Monday Year 10
- Tuesday Year 9
- Wednesday No assembly – cleaning of hall
- Thursday Year 8
- Friday Year 7

There have been some slight changes to our Year 7 tutor groups to ensure a more even spread of different abilities within the same year group. All those affected have been notified.

You may remember when we changed from house groups to year groups, we envisaged the head of year and pastoral manager to stay with their year group all the way through to Year 11. However, after review we have decided to focus the skills gained in each key stage area and limit the rotation of heads of year and pastoral managers to their own key stage groups. This means, our Year 9 head of year and pastoral manager will rotate and take on Year 7, and the Year 11 team will rotate to take on Year 10. Tutors will remain with their current form groups.



Screens uniform supplies

Our uniform supplier has advised they will continue with their appointment system this year, meaning customers have their allocated time slot where they can walk straight in and receive a 1-1 service helping them with sizing and purchasing the correct garments. The appointments will need to be booked online and will show appointments for the current and following week only. We have been asked to encourage parents to put their orders in as early as possible, and specifically for parents of Year 6 students and those that may require specially made garments as some individually made items can take up to 12 weeks to produce.

Free school meals

Further support for families of free school meals has been confirmed and we are pleased to advise that a £15 Edenred voucher will be available for all eligible children. The vouchers are electronic and the link to access this will be sent directly to you from Edenred.

This week I have spent quite a bit of time walking round the school and going into lessons as usual. Break times are also a time when I enjoy being 'out and about' and it is good to see the extended bubble areas for social time being appreciated by students. We have also had governors in school with Mrs Ellis, our Chair of Governors looking at how the changed bubbles are working.

It has been probably the busiest half-term I have ever experienced in education – a judgment that goes back to September 1977 when I started as a newly qualified teacher. Grading for Year 11 has been a momentous task for staff, as it has been for the students sitting various assessments, so half-term should be enjoyed by everyone. It is always a mixture of relaxation and work for me but I am so looking forward to Bank Holiday Monday as we are meeting up with our boys. Having moved into their respective new flats, we are meeting up at Robert's place in Highgate then going out for lunch. Eating out was something we did regularly and took for granted before lockdown, so the whole experience now brings with it added enjoyment. It will be fantastic see them and I have to say that they both cope very well with their dad's endless hugs when we meet up. In fact, they told me that when they were at university, they would warn anyone they brought home that I would go crazy with excitement at seeing them; and they were right. It will never change.

I hope you have a great bank holiday weekend and half term and I look forward to seeing our remaining cohorts back in school on Monday 7th June, punctual, in uniform and ready to learn.

Yours faithfully



Jim Nixon
Principal