

12th February 2021

Dear Parent and Carer

I hope this letter finds you safe and well. I also hope your child is ready for their half term break and some well earned days off away from their computer screen. Let us all hope that the weather enables everyone to make the most of their daily exercise slot outdoors. Today's letter is a short one with an update on three matters that I have written about in recent weeks.

National Reopening of Schools

In my letter last week, I confirmed that we did not have any further details about when we will be allowed to return to school. This situation has not changed. The date the Prime Minister set out as being the earliest schools would be able to return (Monday 8th March) is the one we are planning for and I hope very much indeed that this is confirmed for all students. The government had previously said they would like to give parents, students and schools two weeks' notice when a return date is decided. If this remains their intention, Monday 22nd February (the first day after half term) is the date we may be informed. This would be welcome news at the start of a new half term, so fingers crossed!

Calendar 2021/22

I hope you have seen the update on the calendar for the academic year 2021/22. There is the addition of an extra 'Bank Holiday' to celebrate Her Majesty The Queen's Platinum Jubilee. The traditional May Bank Holiday weekend has been moved to Thursday 2nd June and an additional Bank Holiday has been added on Friday 3rd June. This has created a four-day weekend of celebrations and events to mark the occasion. It seems hard to think about such celebrations just now, but let us hope when that time comes we can enjoy them.

In recent days there has also been some speculation about other possible national changes to the school academic year. This has initially come about as part of the government's planning to help students who may have fallen behind, but it is also something that has been considered before. Ideas such as reducing the longer summer holiday and moving the additional time to another date in the autumn/winter such as the Christmas Holiday, or lengthening a half term have been raised.

Understandably, I have been asked by some parents who have a holiday booked for this summer as to whether or when this change might happen. If there were to be any major national changes they would not be made for this academic year, but more likely be for 2021/2 or even 2022/3. There would be lots of factors to consider, including the timeline for students taking exams and receiving their results. Another point that has been discussed is the timeline by which students apply to university and whether they should do this before their results, or after them. We will follow this with interest and let you know of any changes. In the meantime, our calendar for next academic year remains as published.

Consultation

In my last letter I said I would write this week and seek your views on some possible changes to our school day and working arrangements, including Parents' Evenings for 2021/22. Below you will find a link that will enable you to share your thoughts. As well as the direct questions, there is also the chance for you to add any other thoughts/comments as well. Staff and students will also follow this same process so it is only your views as parents/carers that I am looking for.

I must stress that when it comes to the timings of the school day, it is assuming that the restrictions on 'bubbles' will have been removed and that separate arrival and departure times are not deemed necessary. It would be appreciated if replies could be given by Friday 5th March. Here is the link: <https://forms.gle/v9p9hxywWjRghf358>

Thank you for your participation and your continued support.

Yours sincerely



David Herbert