

COVID-19 Update, Mr Reynolds, Executive Principal, Friday 12th February 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

I have just finished reading Barak Obama's excellent memoir, A Promised Land. In its first few pages he tells us why he's writing it and who it's aimed at. "I've learnt to place my faith in my fellow citizens, especially those of the next generation, whose conviction in the equal worth of all people seems to come as second nature, and who insist on making real those principles that their parents and teachers told them were true but perhaps never fully believed themselves." He manages to capture so eloquently our optimism and gratitude towards our young people. He adds, we'll want the next generation to decide, "Do we settle for the world as it is, or do we work for the world as it should be?" As teachers and parents our role in all of this is to help them do so by giving them moral integrity and the confidence to dare to think differently.

Year 11 Assessment Week

While speaking with Mr Howell yesterday, he said how delighted he has been with the mature way the students have approached their assessments over the last 6 days. I would like to thank all our Year 11 students who have prepared for their assessments and taken them seriously. We will use the information from these assessments to inform our teaching over the coming months and to begin to form the data picture that will evidentially culminate in a grade in the summer. The students should now take a well-earned break from their school work over half term.

Year 12 and 13 Assessment Week

This will take place straight after half term. I would encourage students to use their half term weekly wisely combining some preparation for subject assessments with some 'down time'.

Mass Testing

Once schools reopen, the current guidance is for mass testing to take place for all students twice with a gap of, at least, between 3-5 days. Although it is not clear if the Lateral Flow Tests (LFT) are robust, the current guidance is that mass testing will occur with LFT's and we have assumed this will commence at some point following the spring half term break. This could be subject to a U-turn and we await the announcement on the 22 February to confirm the position.

However, testing can only be carried out if we have consent. If you haven't already done so, could I urge you to complete a consent form for your child using the following link:

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=VHM9HdxVekq9wYI3D9haxQjHzAFhDyNPoJPBYB96BcxUMIM1U0VIWFBIUkRYVEFXNDY3MVUwSUZZVS4u>

Thank you

I would like to thank all parents and carers who have taken the time to send us messages of gratitude and support over the last few weeks; it is very much

appreciated. We do share them with our staff. Although we have had some challenging snow days, we have succeeded in remaining open every day for vulnerable children and key worker children. I would like to publicly pay tribute to our staff who have continued to come into work everyday despite the difficult weather. Indeed, to keep the school open some have caught buses or walked in. Of course, it is a community effort. By us doing our bit we have helped you do your bit.

Whatever the weather throws at us over the next week I wish you and your family a safe and warm half term.

Kevin Reynolds, Executive Principal