

LH/JG

10th September 2020

Dear Parents / Carers,

As we reach the end of the first full week back, I wanted to write and update you on the start of term. It has been wonderful to welcome back pupils to school. I would like to extend a particularly warm welcome to our new Year 7 pupils and their families and the same for those joining us in Year 12.

I have been really impressed with how well our pupils have coped with the new rules and routines around school. It is very different in some ways, with different doors for each year group, zoned areas for breaks and lunchtimes and of course all the hand sanitising and careful rooming.

We have asked all pupils to wear masks in corridors, when lining up in the dining room and where they find themselves in more crowded spaces. They have done this brilliantly, and maturely. We have had some spare masks in school for the first few days to give to pupils who have lost or broken masks, however we do have fairly limited supplies and from next week there will be a small charge of 50p for masks in school. It would be advisable to provide your child with a fabric reusable mask, as these are proving to be more durable.

We are aiming to keep pupils outside at breaks and lunchtime as much as possible in the fresh air (although we have had one wet lunchtime already and I am not overly optimistic about Rossendale weather!) so it would be advisable for all pupils to bring a warm and waterproof coat to school. We will of course allow them inside in to classrooms if it is really wet.

We have fielded some calls from parents who have heard rumours about children testing positive in school. I would like to reassure you that these are just rumours. There have been some incidents where pupils have stayed at home to get symptoms checked, or have had to isolate because of contact with a suspected or confirmed case. Should we have a confirmed case in school, rest assured that we will inform any parents of children affected as soon as we are made aware. Some of the pupils in school have got the wrong end of the stick and caused unnecessary worry to parents.

Despite the differences around school, our core values and ethos remain the same, so it has been important to reiterate these to pupils in initial assemblies and form sessions. I am aware many pupils are anxious about returning and I have been encouraging them to look out for each other and to talk to staff if they are worried. I know the strong relationships we have here will help us all get through this challenging time. If you are worried about your child, do get in touch and we can put additional support in place.

At this time of year, I would usually be updating you on the summer results. Obviously, this summer our results days were a little different. It was a challenging time for all of us, but particularly those Year 11 and 13 pupils caught up in all the difficulties and media furore. Despite all this we had much to celebrate, with outstanding results on both days. We are delighted so many of our Year 11 pupils have decided to join us in sixth form this time, and achieved excellent results. In year 13 we saw some fabulous grades achieved and students moving on to a wide range of university courses, apprenticeships and gap years: everything from Engineering and Sport Science to Nursing, Teaching and Graphic Design. We are really proud of all of them.

As always at the start of the year, there are some staff changes to share. We welcome Miss Thomson to the maths department and Ms Guy to Drama, this September. In addition we have Mr Emmott, Mr Park, and Mr Parkin joining our team of Teaching Assistants and Mr Hanlon is our new Technician in the Art, Design & Technology department. Miss Procter is currently on maternity leave and we were delighted to hear of the safe arrival of baby number two over the summer.

As ever, I will keep in touch regularly and let you know of any changes in school, in the meantime do continue to get in touch should you have any questions or queries,

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jo Griffiths', written in a cursive style.

Jo Griffiths
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