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STOCKPORT SCHOOL

Headteacher Mr I. R. Irwin BA (Hons), MSc, NPQH

16th December 2019

Ref: End of Term Letter – Christmas 2019

Dear Parents/Carers

As you will be aware, the autumn term finishes for Christmas on Thursday, 19th December. Students in Years 7 - 10 will be dismissed after lunch, at the slightly earlier time of 12.00 pm.

Students in Year 11 will be dismissed for the Christmas break at 3.20pm on Wednesday 18th December, following the 3 week completion of their GCSE Mock exams.

In terms of attendance, it is important that all students attend each day this week through until their dismissal date, shown above. We will be recognising and celebrating students with full and improved attendance at the end of the week in special celebration assemblies where there will be prizes, and special award raffles taking place.

The new spring term begins for all students on Monday, 6th January 2020 at 8.50 am. Students should arrive on site for 8.45 am.

Ofsted Inspection

As you will be aware we were visited by an Ofsted Inspection team last week, to assess us under the new much tougher, '2019 Education Inspection Framework' (EIF). Whilst I am not allowed to share the outcome of the inspection at this point prior to the official publication of the Report, I did want to write to you in the interim, to thank you for your much valued support.

An Ofsted Inspection is a very challenging, high-stakes process which undoubtedly creates a significant amount of additional pressure for staff, students and the wider school community, who find themselves being assessed and judged against extremely high-bar measures, by unknown external visitors. For this to occur, in this particular instance to us, during one of the very busiest weeks of our school year, with mock exams, productions, external visits, charity events and many other activities taking place, just prior to the Christmas break at the end of a very long term, and also during very poor wet weather conditions, only added to the challenge.

I am delighted to report however, that we came together, as always, as a strong and unified community, to demonstrate our considerable strengths as one of the very best schools in Greater Manchester. Our students were incredible, and were an absolute credit to you and to the school.

Having witnessed our community in action this week, I have no doubt that due to our strong moral purpose, commitment and drive, we will undoubtedly continue to go from strength to strength, for the good of our students and our community. I am therefore incredibly proud to be associated as the Headteacher of such a brilliant school!



The official Report will be published by Ofsted within 30 working days, and I will ensure that you are notified once it becomes available. We all look forward to seeing it for the first time, as I suspect based upon the verbal feedback that it will make for very pleasant reading indeed, about a school that we can all continue to be very proud of.

Thank you once again for your support as parents and carers, and thank you to our incredible students for showcasing so well, our amazing school to Ofsted.

Leading Parent Partnership Award – Successful Reaccreditation

I am delighted to inform you that after a very successful reassessment visit, we received confirmation that we have been successfully reassessed as a 'Leading Parent Partnership Award' (LPPA) school for an extended period of three years, meeting and in many cases exceeding the criteria for their assessment. We have actually been asked if we could be used as a case study by the LPPA organisation to demonstrate exemplary practice to others!

Mr Rough, Assistant Headteacher, who led upon the reaccreditation, and I would like to thank everyone for their support in helping us to achieve this award. The award firmly supports the high quality work that we put in as a school to help our student and parent/carers community.

Christmas Charities & Christmas Dinner Day

We are proud that Stockport School has a strong community spirit and also actively supports charities. This year, we once again supported the Hits Radio (Key 103) Mission Christmas Toy Appeal which literally saw hundreds of toys/presents being brought into school by our own students, parents and staff. In support of the Mission Christmas appeal, we also ran our charity Christmas jumper/attire day on Tuesday 10th December (*the first day of our Ofsted Inspection!*), where for a £1.00 donation, many of our students and staff came into school dressed with a festive jumper or associated festive attire. Tuesday 10th December, was also the date of our popular Christmas dinner day, where the majority of our students and staff enjoyed the seasonal festivities together. I would like to thank you and our students for your very generous support once again, of our charitable work and assisting those less fortunate; I believe this is another notable hallmark of our caring community school.

Parents' Evenings and Grade Cards

On Thursday, 23rd January, we will be holding our Year 11 Parents' Consultation Evening (5.00 pm – 7.45 pm). The second grade card of the year will be issued to parents of our Year 11 students upon arrival for the evening. Students in Year 11 will also be issued, earlier that week, with their GCSE Mock Exam Certificate, during a 'Mock Examination Results Day' event.

All other Year groups will receive their first personal grade card at the end of this week. An electronic version of the grade card will be available to parents via our FireFly VLE system, and you will be sent a School Comms message before the end of the week notifying you of how to access it. A traditional paper copy of the grade card will also be published and sent out to parents at the start of January. As ever, once you receive it, I would encourage you to spend some time looking over it and discussing the information contained on the grade card, regarding targets, academic progress, and attitude to learning, with your child. It is important that both you and your child are fully aware of their progress to date and also of any areas in which they may need to direct their attention to during the spring term. If you would like any further information or support regarding student progress or the grade card, I would ask you to contact your child's Director of Progress or Pastoral Manager.

Spring and Summer Terms Calendar

I am pleased to include with this letter, a copy of the spring and summer terms calendar for your information. The calendar outlines all of the key events and activities taking place over the next two terms. I would encourage you to support and attend each event appropriate to your child. Further details on the school year and calendar can be found on the school website, www.stockportschool.net

2020-21 Term Dates (Provisional)

I have also included with this letter, a copy of the provisional 2020-21 Term Dates for your information. Please could I remind you that I am no longer allowed to authorise term time holidays for students. Parents are therefore, advised to arrange any family holidays outside the published school term times, and also to try and arrange any necessary medical appointments for the end of the school day. You may be aware that the NHS have just recently

expanded their services to offer evening and weekend GP appointments, which we would encourage students to access as an alternative to missing school time.

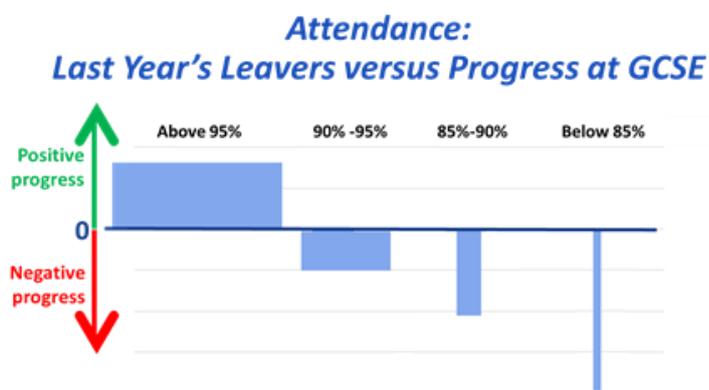
Attendance and the Impact of Absence

Our attendance target for all students is **100%** (190 days attended from 190) and we have a core expectation that all students achieve well over 96% attendance, missing no more than 8 school days throughout the year.

It goes almost without saying that regular attendance is essential to progress and success and for that reason I would hope that you will support us in helping your child to achieve well over 96% this year.

Every day matters and each day missed hinders progress, see below:

- **95% Attendance = 2 weeks off (52 lessons missed) per year, and 2 ½ months (260 lessons missed) - Almost a school term over a five year period!**
- **90% Attendance = 4 weeks off (104 lessons missed) per year, and 5 months (520 lessons missed) - Almost half a year over a five year period!**



In order for students to achieve well over 96% attendance and therefore succeed in school, I would ask you to support us by sending your child into school on time for 8.45am every day where possible, as lateness to school is also disruptive to learning and hinders progress.

It would also be helpful if you could try to arrange medical and dental appointments for outside of school hours using the new NHS out-of-hours evening and weekend GP appointment service and therefore, keep medical appointments in school time to an absolute minimum. If on the rare occasion a medical appointment during school time is unavoidable, then I would ask that your child attends school beforehand and/or returns to school immediately that same day following their appointment. If a student is absent from school first thing in the morning or immediately after lunch then they cannot receive an attendance present mark for that session.

Please could I also remind you that I am not allowed to authorise holidays during term time and the Local Authority will issue Penalty Notices for a minimum of £60 per parent per child for high/unauthorised absence for holidays taken during term time. Where there is evidence of persistent or ongoing unauthorised absence the Local Authority may seek to prosecute parents with a fine of up to £2,500, or in more serious cases, leading to a term of imprisonment.

In order for us to address this key priority of good attendance and to support you as parents, we now regularly on a daily basis conduct home visits to check on the welfare of students who fall below our core expectation of less than 96% attendance. These home visits may on occasion, also be accompanied by our Community Police Officer or Local Education Authority Welfare Officer.

Of course, for the vast majority of our students who attend school regularly each day, we also seek to recognise, celebrate and reward good attendance with our students through our rewards system, and we will be looking to enhance this even further in 2020.

I would like to thank you for your support in helping us to maximise attendance and in doing so, enhancing student success through positive progress and outcomes.

Punctuality

Whilst the vast majority of our students arrive on the school premises on time, we are concerned for the small minority of students who arrive at school late, after lessons have begun.

At Stockport School, we expect your child to be in school and ready to learn every morning for at least 8.45am to begin the first lesson of the day at 8.50am. The first ten minutes of a lesson are often key to the rest of the session and students who miss this time often struggle for the rest of the lesson. If this occurs even once, it could potentially mean that they are missing out on an hour or more of learning on that day. Persistent lateness could mean that even more learning time is missed which could have a knock-on effect on overall progress and attainment.

If your child, like most of our students, has had an excellent attendance and punctuality record over the past term, as can be checked from their recent Grade Card, then it is worthy of note and recognition, as your child is clearly putting themselves in a very strong position for future success. However, if your child has generated any number of late marks or absences during the past term, I would ask you to take this opportunity to discuss the importance of maintaining consistently good attendance and punctuality and the negative impact that it is likely to have upon their learning and progress if they are unable to do so. This may mean that you need to encourage your child to get up/leave for school earlier. We appreciate any support you can offer so we can work towards improving attendance and punctuality across the school and therefore, enhancing progress and outcomes for all of our students.

If you have concerns about your child's attendance and/or punctuality or need further support in regard to attendance and punctuality issues, please contact your child's Pastoral Manager or alternatively, Mr Whitehead, Deputy Headteacher, by calling the school number on 0161 483 3622, or alternatively by email: p.whitehead@stockport.stockport.sch.uk

Enrichment and Extra-curricular involvement

At Stockport School we are committed to providing enriching opportunities for students away from the classroom. We believe that by encouraging students to participate in activities they can develop essential skills for life. Students can try new experiences, build friendships, confidence and resilience and have fun too.

Enrichment activities at Stockport School take many forms. For example, there are enrichment activities on offer during lunchtime, Tutor time, at the end of the day, sports - both practice and fixtures, throughout the year and a host of other calendared events, opportunities and experiences.

I would like to take this opportunity to encourage your child to make a New Year's resolution and put themselves forward and get involved in a new and exciting extra-curricular enrichment activity in the spring term. Full details of our extensive enrichment programme are available on our website.

Literacy and Reading for pleasure

One of the most important and effective ways in which you as parents can support your child with their learning is by encouraging your child to read at home. The ability to read well is essential for progress across all curriculum and subject areas. Our research indicates that students who read only rarely outside school tend to have lower chronological reading ages than their peers, and thus struggle to make the progress that they should.

In school, we have a whole school focus on literacy and reading, especially with our Accelerated Reading Programme, and I would ask that you as parents try to support us and your child by spending time, where possible, reading with them or by encouraging them to read for themselves and then asking them about what they have read and learnt. Reading materials could include for example, magazines, comics, newspapers, on-line articles, e-books and of course traditional books. With Christmas just around the corner, I would suggest that giving a reading present would make an ideal stocking filler.

With regards to Library books, please could we remind students and parents of the importance of them returning any outstanding or overdue books as soon as possible. This is important in order for us to maintain a good range of books available to our students at any one time. Where a book is overdue, a reminder message will have been sent asking for the immediate return of the book or for a £5.00 payment if the book is lost or damaged.

Uniform and Appearance

I would like to thank you for your continued support in helping us to maintain high standards with regard to uniform and appearance. There has been a huge improvement in the overall appearance of our students over the last few years, and we now thankfully see very few students wearing make-up, jewellery, hooded tops, incorrect footwear, and in possession of mobile phones.

As we move through the colder winter months however, I would like to remind all parents that students are not allowed to wear hooded tops, sports type jackets or alternative sweatshirts anywhere on the school grounds. Only outdoor coats are permitted, to be worn outside of the school blazer. Coats should then be removed once inside the school building. In order to ensure consistency with this policy, students wearing inappropriate non-school uniform anywhere on the school grounds, including hooded tops, sports jackets and alternative sweatshirts will be challenged and those banned items will be confiscated for parents to collect. It is important therefore, that students come equipped ready for the winter months with an appropriate outdoor coat to keep them warm and dry.

I would also like to remind all parents/carers that the following items are also not allowed in school:

- Students are not allowed to wear jewellery apart from a simple wrist watch (*smart watches are not allowed*).
- Body piercings are not allowed, apart from one small plain stud in each ear lobe.
- Hair styles and colours should not be extreme.
- Make-up and false eyelashes are not allowed and should not be worn.
- Acrylic nails are also not suitable for school and are not allowed.
- Skirts if worn, must be of a reasonable length just above or below the knee.
- Visible 'snow socks' or other fashion boot socks are not permitted.
- Finally, students must also continue to wear black polishable shoes.

Please visit the Parents section of our website, if you need to check any information on our rules regarding our uniform and appearance policy.

We would ask for your support as parents with this upon your child's return to school in the New Year.

Smart Watches as Christmas Presents

I would like to advise that Apple and other Smart watch devices are not allowed in school. Please be aware of this if you are purchasing one as a present for your child at Christmas, as they will not be permitted in school.

Emergency Closure and Parental Contact Details

In the case of exceptionally bad weather, information will be posted on the school website, www.stockportschool.net and also on Stockport Council's website, www.stockport.gov.uk. We will also use our emergency parent contact system (School Comms) to send emails to all parents for whom we have an up-to-date email address. If you think we may not have your correct email address or telephone number, please email s.wordsworth@stockport.stockport.sch.uk

SIMS Parent App Lite (New Data Collection App)

In order to comply with GDPR regulations we now operate a new electronic software system called SIMS Parent App Lite, which is used to collect personal information and emergency contact details for your child/children. SIMS Parent App Lite enables us to share Data Collection information conveniently and securely with you to check, amend and send back to us without the need for paper Data Collection Sheets being printed. The electronic Data Collection will only be sent to Contacts living at the same address as the student.

We would strongly encourage you to use this new App, to see the personal information that we hold for your child/children. You will be able to access this via your smartphone, tablet or PC, although you can still make changes by email or telephone. If you have not yet accessed the new system and would like to do so, please email Mrs Wordsworth, Student Records and Exams Officer at s.wordsworth@stockport.stockport.sch.uk Mrs Wordsworth will then send you the necessary link information and guidance on how to access the useful App.

Firefly

A reminder that you can use our Firefly parent portal to access information about your child and their school life. This is available in a web browser, on a computer or smartphone, or by using the 'Firefly for Parents' App. By accessing the Firefly portal, you can see details about your child's:

- Attendance
- Achievements and behaviour
- Reports and Grade Cards that have been sent home over the last year
- Tasks or homework that have been set for them
- Marks and feedback from selected tasks and homework
- Timetable

If you have not already activated your account then just use the email address that we have listed for you, or make sure that we have an up to date address. Our IT Co-ordinator, Mr Bowers, will be happy to help you with any queries about the portal. You can contact Mr Bowers at j.bowers@stockport.stockport.sch.uk.

Bikes and Student Safety

I would like to remind students and parents of the importance of bike safety and road awareness. There have been a number of reports this year of students riding bikes without taking due care and attention of the environment around them, sometimes causing concern to pedestrians and car drivers. In the interests of safety, I would ask that all students ensure that their bikes are road worthy in terms of safety and that they show due consideration to other persons when riding to and from school in order to avoid an accident. We would also encourage all students to use lights during the winter months, and to wear a helmet to protect against injury in the event of an accident.

Bike Security

Students should also note that all bicycles must be stored securely in our bike compound/rack area, accessible via the Lake Street entrance. If students come to school on a bike, they must secure their bike with a lock in this area by no later than 8.45am. For health and safety reasons bikes cannot be left anywhere else on the school site, and will be removed if found.

It is important that all students secure their bicycles with a robust lock inside the compound/rack area in order to guard against theft. This is especially important at the present time, as there has been a spate of reported thefts and attempted bicycle thefts all across the borough, including on a couple of occasions in the past year, from our school, where bicycles have not been secured with a robust lock and have been stolen by intruders. Although the school provides a secure compound/rack area, it cannot be held responsible for damage or theft of any bicycles left on the school premises. Bicycles are therefore, brought into school at the risk and responsibility of the owner.

Car Parking and Student Safety

Please could I also remind parents who drop-off or pick-up students from school, not to park on double yellow or zig-zag lines as not adhering to this puts our students and other passers-by at risk. There have been a number of incidents in the past year, where inconsiderate parking and driving near to the school grounds has caused a hazard and a danger to our students and other passers-by. The safety of students and others is obviously of paramount importance and I would ask for your support in this.

Popularity of the School

Further to our ongoing successful school improvement initiatives, I was very pleased to learn a couple of weeks ago, that the school's popularity has continued to grow amongst our local community and beyond, and in particular, for future parents interested in obtaining a place for their child at Stockport School.

As of mid-November, only a couple of weeks after the national application for Year 7 places in September 2020 deadline, Stockport School had received a record number of applications for the 250 Year 7 places available in September 2020. In total, there were an incredible 676 applicants listed as having applied for a place in Year 7 next year, of which 334 were first choice and 477 were first or second choice!

This is a great indication of just how strongly and positively the community, and in particular, parents in the immediate locality and beyond, now view our school and as a result, are desperate for their own children to attend. I believe this is another very strong indication and recognition of just how well our current students, supported by our very dedicated and skilled staff are performing.

Finally, I would like to wish you a very happy Christmas and a peaceful, healthy and hopefully successful New Year.

With very best wishes,



Mr. I. R. Irwin
Headteacher

Term Dates – Spring & Summer 2020

Spring Term 2020 (12 weeks: 6/6 – 60 Teaching Days)

Begins: Monday, 6th January 2020 at 8.45am (BLUE week)

Half-Term: Closes: Friday, 14th February 2020
Opens: Monday, 24th February 2020 at 8.45am (BLUE week)

Ends: Friday, 3rd April 2020

**School will be closed for Easter, inclusive of Good Friday on 10th April 2020 & Easter Monday on 13th April 2020*

Summer Term 2020 (12 weeks: 5/7 – 59 Teaching Days)

Begins: Monday, 20th April 2020 at 8.45am (BLUE week)

**School will be closed for the May Day Bank Holiday on Friday, 8th May 2020 (*75th Anniversary of VE Day)*

Half-Term: Closes: Friday, 22nd May 2020
Opens: Monday, 1st June 2020 at 8.45am (RED week)

Ends: Friday, 17th July 2020

Please remember to avoid term time dates when booking medical appointments or holidays

Parental Calendar – Key Dates 2020

Spring Term 2020

Monday 6th January 2020	Students return to school (Blue week)
Monday 13th January	Year 10 exams in practical subjects (until 16 th January) Year 9 examinations all week
Friday 17th January	Year 10 written examinations begin (until 28 th January)
Monday 20th January	Year 10 examinations continue all week
Wednesday 22nd January	Year 11 students receive GCSE mock exam results period 5 Year 11 student review of <i>Assessment 2</i> with form tutor during registration
Thursday 23rd January	Year 11 Parents' Consultation Evening 5.00-7.45pm <i>Assessment 2</i> reports for Year 11 issued to parents
Thursday 30th January	Year 11 GCSE Music Solo Day
Thursday 6th February	Year 8 Parents' Consultation Evening 5.00-7.45pm
Tuesday 11th February	Year 9 TDIPV/Men ACWY immunisations all morning
Wednesday 12th February	Year 9 TDIPV/Men ACWY immunisations all morning
Thursday 13th February	Year 10 Parents' Consultation Evening 5.00-7.45pm
Friday 14th February	School closes for half term holiday 3.00pm
Monday 24th February	Students return to school (Blue week)
Tuesday 25th February	Year 11 group photo 2.40pm
Tuesday 3rd March	Year 9 Gateway visit to Manchester University (to be confirmed)
Monday 9th March	Additional Year 11 English/Maths mock exams this week
Thursday 12th March	Year 9 Options Evening 6.00-8.00pm
Friday 13th March	Year 10/11 Geography visit to Glaramara (returning 15 th March)
Thursday 19th March	Year 9 Parents' Consultation Evening 5.00-7.45pm Year 11 GCSE Music Ensemble Day
Monday 23rd March	Deadline for handing in Year 9 Options Choice Form Year 11 GCSE Graphics exam this week (2 days)
Thursday 26th March	HPV immunisations - Year 8 girls and boys
Friday 27th March	Dementia Ball
Wednesday 1st April	HPV immunisations - Year 8 girls and boys Student review of <i>Assessment 3</i> with form tutor during registration (Y11) Student review of <i>Assessment 2</i> with form tutor during registration (Y7-10) Spring Concert
Thursday 2nd April	Year 11 Directors of Study Intervention Evening for Parents (2) 5.30-7.30pm
Friday 3rd April	School closes for Easter holidays 3.00pm <i>Assessment 3</i> reports for Year 11 issued to parents <i>Assessment 2</i> reports for Years 7-10 issued to parents

Summer Term 2020

Monday 20th April	Students return to school (Blue week)
Wednesday 22nd April	Year 7 Gateway visit to Manchester University (to be confirmed)
Monday 27th April	Year 11 GCSE MFL Speaking exams all week
Monday 4th May	Year 7 Parents' Consultation Evening 4.30-7.30pm Year 10 additional Maths, English and Science exams this week Year 8 English exam, Year 7/8 Maths exams this week
Friday 8th May	School closed for May Bank Holiday (75 th Anniversary of VE Day)
Monday 11th May	Year 11 written GCSE examinations begin
Friday 22nd May	School closes for half term holiday 3.00pm
Monday 1st June	Students return to school (Red week)
Monday 15th June	Year 7/8 Science, Year 7/9 English, Y9 Maths, History, MFL exams this week Year 10 additional English, Maths, Science and MFL exams this week
Monday 22nd June	Year 10 French, German, Spanish mock speaking tests (until 3 rd July)
Wednesday 24th June	Examination Board Contingency Day
Friday 26th June	Year 11 Leavers' Assembly and Prom Year 11 Form Tutor reports issued to parents
Tues 30th June – Weds 1st July	Year 10 Duke of Edinburgh Award Qualifying Expedition
Thursday 2nd July	Year 6 Induction Day and Evening
Friday 3rd July	Year 10 Reward visit
Monday 6th July	Year 10 Work Experience all week Year 7, 8, 9 Sports Day - morning House Carnival - afternoon Stockport School Community Awards Evening 6.00-8.00pm
Tuesday 7th July	Year 7 Reward visit
Wednesday 8th July	Year 8 Reward visit
Thursday 9th July	Year 9 Reward visit
Friday 10th July	Reserve morning for Sports Day
Monday 13th July	Year 9/10 visit to Berlin (returning 15 th July)
Tuesday 14th July	Year 10 return to school after Work Experience
Wednesday 15th July	Student review of <i>Assessment 3</i> with form tutor during registration (Y7-10)
Thursday 16th July	<i>Assessment 3</i> /Form Tutor Reports for Years 7-10 issued to parents
Friday 17th July	Whole school House Celebration assembly School closes for summer holidays



Term Dates 2020-21 (Provisional)

Autumn Term 2020 (15 weeks: 7 ½ / 7 ½ or 37 + 37 = 74 Teaching Days)

*School will be closed to students on Tuesday, 1st September 2020 for staff training (INSET)

Begins: Wednesday, 2nd September 2020 at 11:00am (Years 7/11 only) (RED week)
Thursday, 3rd September 2020 at 8:45am (all Year groups)

*School will be closed to students on Friday, 9th October 2020 for staff training (INSET)

Half-Term: Closes: Friday, 23rd October 2020
Opens: Monday, 2nd November 2020 at 8.45am (RED week)

Ends: Tuesday, 22nd December 2020

Spring Term 2021 (10 ½ weeks: 5 ½ / 5 or 27 + 25 = 52 Teaching Days)

Begins: Thursday, 7th January 2021 at 8.45am (BLUE week)

Half-Term: Closes: Friday, 12th February 2021
Opens: Monday, 22nd February 2021 at 8.45am (BLUE week)

Ends: Friday, 26th March 2021

*School will be closed for Easter, inclusive of Good Friday on 2nd April 2021 & Easter Monday on 5th April 2021

Summer Term 2021 (13 weeks: 7 / 6 or 34 + 30 = 64 Teaching Days)

Begins: Monday, 12th April 2021 at 8.45am (RED week)

*School will be closed for the May Day Bank Holiday on Monday, 3rd May 2021

Half-Term: Closes: Friday, 28th May 2021
Opens: Monday, 7th June 2021 at 8.45am (BLUE week)

Ends: Friday, 16th July 2021

Staff Training (INSET) + 5 days (School closed to students)

- Tuesday, 1st September 2020
- Friday, 9th October 2020
- Monday, 19th July 2021 *C/S*
- Tuesday, 20th July 2021 (disaggregated)
- Wednesday, 21st July 2021 (disaggregated)

Please remember to avoid term time dates when booking medical appointments or holidays