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# STOCKPORT SCHOOL

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

17<sup>th</sup> December 2020

Ref: End of Term Letter – Christmas 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

As you will be aware from my previous communication regarding COVID and plans for the end of term, we finish our autumn term face to face in-school teaching tomorrow at 3.00pm on Friday, 18<sup>th</sup> December, with additional remote learning work provided on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> and Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> December, for all students to access and complete via our Firefly system.

The government have allowed schools across Stockport to finish face to face teaching slightly earlier than planned on our calendars due to concerns about the potential for further virus transmissions within school and family communities during the Christmas week, but in doing so have insisted that all students whom would normally be in school on those days must be provided with appropriate remote learning to complete at home which they expect them to complete. I have therefore, asked all of my staff to ensure that they provide work on our online Firefly system, for all students whom they would normally teach on any of those two days, to complete at home prior to them finishing for a very well-deserved festive break. Therefore, in line with the government expectation, please can I ask that you actively encourage your child to access and complete any tasks set for them online on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> and Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> December.

From Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> December and the official start of our Christmas holidays, I have asked all staff to avoid setting any additional work for students to complete over the Christmas break, as it is an important and much needed rest period for all of our students and families. If it is absolutely necessary for GCSE students to continue with ongoing work/exam preparations then they will have been guided and advised of this in advance by their teachers. It is not expected as standard, however that this is to be completed during the holiday period alone.

Having had the year that we have had this year, I know that, like myself, that you will be very much looking forward to the festive break. Public Health England, have however asked me to remind you that whilst looking forward to your child's school holidays, and for many of you to a rare opportunity this year, to spend time with loved ones, if you are planning for Christmas, it's important to think about what you do before, during and after the 5-day Christmas period to ensure everyone remains safe.

People who get coronavirus are infectious before they show symptoms. Many people are infected and go on to infect others without ever showing symptoms. Public Health England state that we all still need to be aware that every extra person that we spend time with, outside our households, increases the opportunity for the virus to spread.

Although we are allowed to meet loved ones and friends in a Christmas bubble of up to three households over five days, we all have to make difficult decisions about whether it is wise to meet up, especially with those who are older, or in vulnerable groups.



Late December and early January may be a period of higher risk for increased virus spread. Take extra care to reduce your contacts before returning to school and work, especially if you have enjoyed seeing friends or family over Christmas.

Please think about what's right to protect your loved ones and communities, while making sure that you and your family have some much-needed time away from school and work.

At the time of writing to you today, I understand the government are considering further national guidance regarding the return date of all secondary aged students in January. At present however we as a school, have no confirmation of any changes. I will therefore write to you if necessary, under separate cover, if we are directed to amend our planned return date of **Thursday, 7<sup>th</sup> January 2021.**

With regards to the spring term, I have attached with this letter, a copy of the new spring term Enrichment Programme, which I would encourage all students to engage with, taking the opportunity to participate in a wide range of amazing additional extra-curricular activities.

I have also included below, a summary reminder of our important expectations regarding uniform, equipment and appearance, for when your child returns to school in the New Year, which we would again appreciate your full support with.

The following items are 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.

As we move through the colder winter months, I would also 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.

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

#### Parents' Evenings and Grade Cards

On Thursday, 28<sup>th</sup> January, we will be holding our first 'Virtual' Year 11 Parents' Consultation Evening. This is obviously an important event in the school year for our Year 11 students, and we aim not to be deterred by COVID in providing an opportunity for a 'virtual on-line' face to face parent-teacher consultation. Further details of this event and how it will be arranged and organised will be sent out to Year 11 parents/carers early in the new year. The second Grade Card of the year, will also be electronically issued to parents/carers of our Year 11 students in advance of that evening, to help inform and guide conversations. Students in Year 11 will also be issued, in early January, with their GCSE Mock Exam Certificate, during a 'Mock Examination Results Day' event. Year 11 parents and carers will also receive an electronic copy of this certificate to go alongside their second Grade Card.

All other Year groups will receive their first personal Grade Card at the beginning of the spring term in early January. An electronic version of the Grade Card will be made available to parents via our Firefly VLE system, and you will be sent a School Comms message in early January notifying you of how to access it. 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.

Finally, at the end of a highly unusual and exceptionally demanding autumn term, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you as parents and carers, for your incredible support this year. I would like to wish you and your families all the very best for the festive period and in the safe celebration of the end of a very notable but not so joyous 2020 and the beginning of 2021. I sincerely hope that 2021 proves to be a much more happy and memorable year of hope and opportunity for us all to be able to enjoy freely with our friends and families once again.

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