



CANSFIELD

ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE TOGETHER

11th December 2020

Dear parents and carers,

As we come to the final week of term I wanted to drop you a letter, with brief updates on a wide range of different issues. I am sure that for us all this has been one of the longest and most difficult years that we have lived through. News of the vaccines that have been developed and are now in the process of being administered across the country shows that there is an end in sight to the pandemic. However, it is far from over now and it is likely that the disruption we have already faced will continue into next year, following the Christmas period. When we return it will be vital that we continue to maintain our commitment to high standards of health and safety, both for the safety of our community and to minimise the numbers of students needing to isolate.

Despite the chaos that has appeared so prevalent, our school has been an oasis of calm. Since September our children have been exceptional – focused, polite, happy and hard working. Our staff team have continued their levels of dedication to the children in their care and we have all benefitted from the support and kindness that we have received from the parents and carers of our children. So thank you to you and your children – I hope 2021 will be a far less eventful year, but despite everything our community has not only got through 2020, but we have come out of it far stronger and poised for future success.

Plans for Last Day

The last day of school is Friday 18th December. As we do every Christmas, we will be finishing at 1pm. The plan for the day will be that students attend periods 1-3 as normal. Following that there will be a 30 minute lunch break and then 30 minutes of form time. We have let the bus company know, so the Y62 bus will arrive shortly after the end of the day to collect children, while other public buses will be operating on their normal timetable.

Christmas Jumper Day – Last Day of Term

In addition to the arrangements outlined above, please also note that the last day of term will be our traditional Christmas Jumper Day. Children are welcome to wear a Christmas jumper along with their own clothes. In normal years we would ask that children donate £1 for a local charity, but in the current circumstances this is absolutely not required. There will be a collection in each form for the Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Foundation Trust in recognition of the incredible work they have done in supporting our community through the foundation, but please do not feel any pressure to contribute.

Hampers

Just to say a massive thank you to all of you who have supported the food collection for the hampers that will be delivered to members of our community who need them this Christmas. The generosity of families was astounding and, if you have seen the photos on Twitter, you will know that the food collected nearly filled the Library. I am certain that the hampers will make a big difference to those who need them.

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Ongoing COVID 19 Precautions

Just a reminder that if your child has a test for COVID, could you please let us know and keep them off school until the results come in. I am incredibly grateful for the close communication we have had with the vast majority of parents when their children have been tested, which has allowed us to act quickly and decisively to ensure the wellbeing of our community and continue to maintain as much consistency in the educational provision for our children.

Remote Learning Update

The feedback that you have provided about our approach to Remote Learning continues to be incredibly useful, both showing how much better it is and also continuing to highlight areas that we can develop. It is likely that this will be an important element of our provision until Easter at least. If you have any comments whatsoever please drop me an email, they are gratefully received.

Options for Year 9

A few parents of Year 9 students have asked me about the options process, when it will begin and how it will work. We plan to follow our normal programme, in which the process will begin around February half term and conclude before Easter. Please be assured that we are looking at a variety of ways of ensuring that you are able to engage with staff to help you and your child make an informed decision.

Year 11 Next Steps

I am sure that all parents of Year 11 students will have noted that the Government intends to continue with examinations this summer. We all have views on this and I continue to lobby the Government, through the Association of School and College Leaders, to ensure that whatever is in place is fair and recognises that our children live in an area that has had one of the highest rates of COVID infection and as a consequence they have had to isolate more than many students in other parts of the country. For now the Government has stated that they will share exam material in advance, that schools can put in extenuating circumstances for those who have been disproportionately affected and that more lenient grade boundaries will be used. In January will be hosting another parent session to discuss out plans for that term. For now though our Year 11s have worked incredibly hard, particularly through their mock exams, and I hope that they can enjoy a rest over the Christmas holidays.

Zoom Meetings

It was lovely to see so many parents in the Zoom meetings we scheduled to discuss issues arising in the school. The feedback we have had from these was very strong and I just wanted to confirm that we will be hosting follow up meetings next term also. We will be in touch with dates for these early next year.

Progress Reports

Due to student absences as a result of COVID we have had to push back our progress reports slightly to allow students to sit missed assessments. We will be sharing Year 11 mock results on Friday 8th January and reports to all year groups will be going out the following week.

Parents Evenings

Following discussions with parents we have made the decision to move to virtual parents' evenings for this academic year. We had hoped to hold face to face meetings at school, but the ongoing uncertainty with regard to COVID means that we cannot guarantee when this would happen. We will be utilising a platform called 'School Cloud' to both book and host the meetings. Our first planned meetings are next week for parents of Year 7 students to discuss their start at Cansfield with their form tutors. From January we will be sharing dates for parents of students in other years to meet with subject teachers and form teachers. We are confident that the system is straightforward to use and is fit for purpose, but as we roll it out if you do have any issues or comments please drop me an email letting me know. As always, if you do have any pressing queries about your child's progress then please just let us know and we can arrange for you to speak with colleagues via phone or we can arrange for you to come into school to meet in person.

As always please feel free to drop me an email at g.baker@cansfield.wigan.sch.uk if you have any comments or queries.

Have a great Christmas and a Happy New Year.



Geoff Baker
Headteacher.