



26 November 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

### *Parent and Student Voice*

Thank you to all of the families that completed the homework and catering surveys. My colleagues find this kind of snapshot data really helpful to inform conversations and decisions as we move forward. Your son or daughter may have been one of the 150 students who also took part in some 'focus group' conversations earlier this term. Again, these snapshots help us keep in touch with what we are doing well and how we can improve our school.

### *Year 12 PTC on Thursday*

No doubt, the step-up from GCSEs has been demanding for many of our year 12s. On Thursday, there will be an opportunity to receive feedback on how the year and courses have begun with their teachers. One of the key features of our sixth form ethos is an emphasis on as much silent study as possible during the school day. We seek to do all we can to avoid students' evenings, weekends and holidays being crowded-out by study demands, which ends up affecting wellbeing and stress levels – not to mention grades. The benefits of being busy each day throughout years 12 and 13 will become more obvious as assessments, mocks and 'the real thing' approaches. Our year 12s are another super group of really engaging students who are a pleasure to teach.

### *COVID Update*

The number of COVID cases amongst students is holding steady but is not falling sufficiently to warrant a shift in our approach. Therefore, wearing face coverings will remain very highly recommended rather than mandatory at CNS. Face coverings remain compulsory on school buses (minus exemptions). Please continue to test biweekly and [upload results](#) so that we can monitor patterns and be sure that asymptomatic cases are being identified.

### *Attendance Matters*

Nadhim Zahawi, Secretary of State for Education, wrote to schools this week to emphasise the importance of re-establishing normal attendance. We know that the past 21 months have caused major disruption in many parts of life and this has been as evident in schools as anywhere else. Whilst our own attendance is above the Oxfordshire secondary school average, it is still at least 1.5% lower than it ought to be (even taking out those students who are forced to be at home due to positive PCRs). This equates to about 15 students being off school each day that would have been in school before the pandemic. Every case is unique of course, but across all schools, including ours, we have to emphasise the value and importance of not missing a single day.

*Continued...*

### *Celebration Assemblies*

As we approach the Christmas holiday, preparations are underway to create your son or daughter's [personal scorecard](#) (years 7 to 11) which forms part of the end of term celebration assembly. We are hoping that this will be the last time these events take place online, rather than in the school hall 'under lights' and with families being invited to join us.

The scorecard seeks to draw attention to their achievements such as house points, or their engagement levels, for example, their classwork and homework commitment. Meanwhile, each subject is also nominating students in each year group who have shown outstanding curiosity or courage so far this year. Drawing attention to the value of falling in love with a subject or demonstrating perseverance and breakthroughs allows us to express the things we value above all.

All families will receive the next scorecard and report before the end of term.

Have a great weekend.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Barry Doherty', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Barry Doherty

Headteacher