



Friday 23 September 2022

Dear Parents and Carers

Perhaps I am not the only one to feel surprised that it is Friday already. Following the period of mourning and Monday’s state funeral, we have enjoyed a great week and we also bid farewell to our German friends at the end of the first leg of the exchange programme. We know they enjoyed their time in England and the Cotswolds, at a time of such national and historic significance. Well done to all of the host families, but also to Miss Richmond who has inspired and led this wonderful experience.

**Open Evening Preparations – Thursday 6 October 2022**

More than ever before we are hoping see the vast majority of our students on site during our open evening. We would all appreciate your support in encouraging your children’s involvement, and we know it will also involve many of you in extra drop-offs and pickups. All students finish school early on that day and the following day is an INSET day – and so there will be time to recover from the late(ish) evening!

Year 7s	Our newest students are invited to work directly with teachers in all departments. Their confidence in their new school always leaves a great impression on the next generation.
Year 8	They will be paired with a sixth former and lead tours of the school. They will be able to reflect on their first year and how they have grown in that time.
Year 9s	We would like these slightly older students to participate in one of the following subjects: PE, music, business studies, dance, drama, design & technology, art & design and computing.
Year 10s	
Years 11s	
Sixth Formers	They will be paired with a year 8 student and lead tours of the school. They will be able to talk about life at the ‘other end of school’ and many will be able to share their personal experiences from the past five or six years.

On Monday, there will be a special assembly to all students regarding open evening. The signing-up process will begin but will require your approval and signature. Please look out for these requests and return as soon as possible. Thank you!

Invitations to year 5 and 6 parents and carers were sent out last week, via primary schools. A copy of that [invitation can be found on our website](#).



## Attendance Matters

Every school in the country, perhaps across the world, is hoping to return to pre-pandemic levels of attendance this year. Normally, our attendance is around 95%, but was 92% last year. 30% of all students were absent for more than 10% of the year (the equivalent of four weeks of school). Please do not imagine that any of us believe that illness or other genuine reasons for absence can be hoped or wished away.

We ask that you invest some time looking at [‘The Importance of Attendance’](#) on our website. The page provides a range of useful information, including: why it is important; how we try to support children and families; what parents and carers can do; arranging medical appointments; and taking holidays during term time. Regarding term time holidays, all state school in the United Kingdom are bound by the same commitment and requirement to deny request for holidays during term time. Please bear this in mind if you are considering the possibility of term time holidays or absences from school.

So far this year, our attendance is currently close to 95%, which is a reasonably good start. Out of nearly 1000 students, 637 have not missed any time from school since the start of term. Typically, this figure has been (and ought to be) much higher. We know that absence figures are made up of individual stories that include unavoidable and understandable absence. However, the bigger picture is one that we and all other schools need to address as we seek to return to consistently high levels of attendance. We shall return to this topic throughout the year.

## Homework

We hope that your children have settled back into a healthy routine to complete their homework. I was personally delighted when both my year 9 classes demonstrated 100% completion following their first task. It made the subsequent lessons straightforward and builds trust and great positivity in a classroom.

Our website sets out some [key messages on homework](#), including why we set homework, and also how much your son or daughter ought to be receiving.

If you have any concerns about the quality or quantity of homework being set, please [get in touch with](#) the teacher directly. He or she will respond promptly and ensure we address any concerns swiftly.

Have a great weekend when it arrives!

Yours faithfully



Barry Doherty  
Headteacher