



Friday 18 November 2022

Dear Parents and Carers

We are now into the full swing of the term and my colleagues are currently entering data on the progress and engagement of your children, ahead of reports later this term.

Well done to our year 11s having completed their mocks and good luck to those in year 13 who are nearing the end of theirs in the coming days.

We are also preparing for the end of term celebration assemblies that will be returning to the main hall for the first time in several years. We are looking forward to being able to restore the pomp and ceremony of those important occasions to draw attention to your children’s character and a wide range of personal and academic achievements. Plus, give out some chocolate!

The Importance of an Education

There are times as a teacher when you know particular messages have really hit home with individuals. One such moment took place this week with my year 9s. We are approaching the end of our topic on the American civil rights movement. We were thinking about why some Americans at that time were so determined to prevent the desegregation of schools, whilst others wished to prevent Black Americans from receiving a meaningful high school education. We touched on the experiences of [Elizabeth Eckford \(opposite\) at Little Rock High School in Arkansas](#), and James Meredith at Mississippi State University, to illustrate the broader obstacles placed in the way of Black American children in the 1950s and 1960s.



It was a light bulb moment for many who suddenly understood the reason why so many adults are so passionate about the education of their own and others’ children. We share a grasp of how education provides perhaps the most peaceful and powerful means by which we can each secure greater personal and professional freedom and happiness in our lives. As one student wrote, “With an education, Black Americans no longer had to rely on others to secure their freedom. Education sets you free.”

Next Week Tutor Time Programme

Coincidentally, next week’s tutor programme is based on the life of Malala Yousafzai; whose own determination to ‘go to school’ led to an attempt on her life. Mrs Armistead’s assembly to the whole school on Monday morning, followed by the articles (opposite) and discussions during the week, will again provide students with a reminder that this thing we call ‘school’ and ‘education’ is perhaps civilisation’s most radical, yet transformative and admirable inventions.



EVERYONE ACHIEVING EVERYONE BELONGING

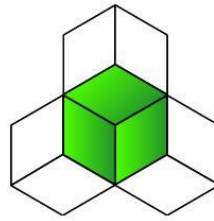
Autumn Statement

In recent weeks and months, school leaders have been working with their unions and professional associations to ensure that the Government is fully aware of the opportunities and risks associated with school funding decisions in the years to come. Whilst few of us envy the difficult decisions that need to be made, there appears to be some good news regarding additional funding for primary and secondary schools in this week's Autumn Statement. As ever, the devil is in the detail and we await a clearer grasp of how funding for early years, further education or high-needs children will be affected.

Nevertheless, it is clear that we live in a society that embraces the belief that education is the best way to address long term challenges in our society and that educators and parents, whilst having one eye on the bigger economic picture, are also enthused by what we can do here and now to set our children up for the decades to come with a first-class education.

Complete Maths Tutor

You may recall, I wrote to families some time ago to introduce a new resource available to our students. Mr Thrower (Head of Mathematics) and his team are extremely positive about this online package and firmly believe that it has the potential to add huge value for each child, of any ability, particularly when used regularly and over time.



Complete Mathematics TUTOR

Our subscription comes to an end in December and as we look ahead to 2023 we need your help. The cost of the package is close to £10,000. However, if we succeed in 'signing-up' 250+ parents or carers then this sum becomes a fraction of the cost. Given the limits on school budgets right now, we ask that you invest no more than 2-3 minutes of your time and sign up; free of charge and without any tangles.

With this in mind, I ask that you look out for a special letter from Mr Thrower on Monday morning. His letter will explain what parents and carers are asked to do. We ask that you set aside a little time to do this and bear in mind that this will open an online gateway that will provide your children with an extremely impressive one-to-one AI based tutoring package that will boost GCSE grades.

And so, this is a cost neutral request with huge savings for the school and significant benefits for your children.

Matilda – the Musical

Many months and many hours of rehearsals are now approaching their final few days, as we look forward to our first big performance since *Joseph* back in 2018. I understand that there are just a handful of tickets left for the Saturday performance and two rows left for the Thursday and Friday showings. We expect them to sell this week and so please do jump on to Parent Pay now if you wish to book a family treat.

Have a wonderful weekend!

Yours faithfully

Barry Doherty
Headteacher

