



23rd July 2021

Dear Parents & Carers,

I write with what will be my final communication of the academic year. I appreciate that this will be welcomed as the last 16 months have seen us write more letters than ever in an increasing effort to keep everyone up to date in a period of frequent changes. I thank you for your patience and stamina in keeping up with them!

As I have stated many times previously, the challenges that schools have faced have never been greater and without a doubt the only way we have been able to overcome these challenges is by every single one of our school community pulling together. I want to pay tribute to all of the school staff who have conquered everything that has been put before them to ensure that our young people get the very best offer we can provide. I would also like to pay special mention to my colleagues on the Senior Leadership Team who have had to adapt and evolve to take on the ever increasing demands placed on us by the government. Most of those demands have been unrealistic and unreasonable, however my team has never faltered and always pushed on to ensure challenges did not become barriers for students or staff.

The end of the academic year always sees a number of changes to our staffing team. Some are moving to new schools, some to retirement and some to further qualifications before returning to us. We say **good luck and goodbye to:** Nichola Hogg (Business Studies maternity cover); Megan Wilson (Teacher training); Julie Franks and Kelly Hopkins (new schools); Mick Redmore (retirement); Jenni Dodd (promotion at new school) and Lisa Gibbs (career change). We also say a heartfelt goodbye to two very long serving members of the teaching staff:

Tom Jenkins has been an inspirational teacher of History, Photography, and many other subjects along the years, but is someone who will perhaps be best remembered for the vast number of trips he has led to all parts of the world. He will be missed by all but we send him off with our best wishes as he moves onto the next chapter in his life. It will no doubt be an exciting one!

The final member of staff we say goodbye to is Sue Stoddart-Sellers. Sue started on the same day as I did over 20 years ago, teaching RE and PE before running the Sixth Form and moving on to head up the Social Science Faculty alongside Mrs Chilton. Sue is a genuinely outstanding teacher who is highly regarded by all members of the school community, staff and students alike. We wish her well as she moves to semi-retirement.

As you will expect, we are well on with the plans for September and, as we did last year, we will be phasing back to school in September. This is in order to accommodate the requirement to conduct on-site lateral flow testing for all students, as we did in January.

Students will, therefore, **start the 2021-22 Academic Year** on the following days:

Headteacher: Mr S Ostler

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Wednesday 8th September: **Year 7 & Year 12 & Year 13**
Thursday 9th September: **Year 8 & Year 11 – Year 7, 12 & 13 continue to attend**
Friday 10th September: **Year 9 & Year 10 – Year 7, 8, 11, 12 & 13 continue to attend.**

Please see the email from Mr Lewchenko regarding the lateral flow testing process that will take place across these first days. **In late August we will share further information in our 'Return to School' Guide**, once we are assured that any last minute government guidance will not significantly alter our plans. As ever, we would rather send the information at this later point than cause confusion by having to revise and reissue communications.

As per my letter earlier in the week, all Covid-19 reporting and tracing responsibility now lies with the national Test & Trace systems. You should report any positive lateral flow tests here: <https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result> and with positive PCR tests follow the NHS Test & Trace system. There is further information about the **changes to self-isolation from 16th August on the school website**. Please also note that **from Friday 23rd July 3pm** the school site and telephone lines will shut with **'radio silence' on all communications** until the week of the 9th August when we open for results days. If you do experience any emergency safeguarding matters that need to be brought to the school's attention during this time, support@hslc.co.uk will be the only email monitored.

We are also hoping that the September phased return will give our new Year 7 students the chance to ease into life at secondary school and to undertake some of the practical transition activities, like school tours and meeting tutors, on their first day. It has been a shame not to be able to bring them all into school this term and we are so looking forward to meeting them all. We are thrilled to be welcoming our largest ever intake of Year 7 students – the numbers are a reflection of the positive and ever-growing reputation of the school, something every one of our students contributes to and should feel very proud to be a part of.

I too continue to be very proud of all associated with the school. I thank you for your continued support across the most challenging year any of us have ever experienced, and I wish you and your families a safe and enjoyable summer break.

Best wishes

Mr Ostler