



24th September 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

I do hope this finds you well.

I wanted to share with you just how amazing our students were this week during the open evening. We had tour guides and classroom experts and each one spoke so confidently and maturely about their experiences at school. Indeed, many of our prospective parents took the time to let us know just how impressed they were with all the students they met. I should like to thank the parents of our student helpers for making arrangements for late collection at the end of the event. The hall was full of our wonderful student volunteers and it made the evening go with a swing.

We have been experiencing some software problems with the fingerprint technology that controls our cashless catering. The issues have meant longer queues than we would like, but have had no impact on the financial or security elements of the process. However, I am pleased to report that following a number of fixes this week, we are hopeful that the problem will soon be completely resolved. I do hope that your child(ren) has/have been enjoying the greater variety of food on offer at break and lunchtime. The outdoor service, Bertha's, is proving very popular, as are the main meal options. We also have a 'grab and go' counter in the refectory where students can get boxed salads, sandwiches and drinks. We have removed all single use plastic from the dining side of all food stations and we are making extensive use of recycled packaging.

You may remember that I wrote to you about our plans to maintain good ventilation in school to help keep everyone safe. As the weather becomes cooler and the classroom windows are open, some learning spaces may not be quite as warm as usual. Whilst students are not permitted to wear coats in class, wearing layers can help. A white T shirt under a school shirt, along with the other uniform items will provide any extra warmth needed. Please be assured that the heating will be on as the temperature drops, but I thought it prudent to raise the issue with you again. As a reminder, we will all benefit from the new £70K boiler that was installed over the summer break.

Public Health England are still advising people in school to wear face coverings in communal areas to help prevent the spread of the virus and are advising that

coverings be worn on public transport. There is no requirement for anyone to wear a face covering in class, although people can if they wish. Thank you for discussing these requests with your child(ren) and helping us to keep our school as safe as possible for all.

Having the right equipment for learning is crucial and I would like to thank parents for supporting us by ensuring their child(ren) has/have what they need. It is so much better for young people if they have their own equipment and are ready for learning, it is another potential barrier removed. Most students carry water bottles and this is a good idea. It is best if these bottles are plastic or steel for safety reasons. Students can refill their bottle in school at break or lunchtime.

Finally, I am pleased to confirm that work has started on renovating the classrooms. It is the beginning of our mission to upgrade and refurbish all learning spaces. The project will take some time, but starts with the four mathematics rooms along the main corridor. The work is due to be completed after half term and students will enjoy a much improved environment.

Very best wishes,



Simon Underdown.
Headteacher.