



4<sup>th</sup> November 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

The government have announced that there is to be an additional bank holiday on the 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2022 to celebrate the Queens Platinum Jubilee. As the 3<sup>rd</sup> June is during our half term break, we will gain a HOLIDAY day at another point in the school year. We have decided to take the additional holiday day on the 8<sup>th</sup> April 2022 - this will extend the Easter holiday by an extra day. The gym and dance festival will then move to the 7<sup>th</sup> April. I do hope this extra day gives families some added flexibility over their Easter break.

Year 11 are preparing for their mock examinations which are scheduled to start at the end of November and Year 13 will be thinking about their mocks which are scheduled to take place after Christmas. Whilst we fully expect to see the return of traditional examinations and assessment in the summer of 2022, we are mindful that it is important for us to prepare for all eventualities. Last year, the year 11 and 13 mocks were just one of a range of assessments that helped us to arrive at the centre assessed grades. If we are asked to provide centre assessed grades for the 2022 session, then we may well use the mocks as part of the evidence bank. Students should revise carefully for the mocks using the resources that teachers have posted on teams and the Thinking Strategies that they have been learning about in tutor time. Parents play a vital role in helping their child to be ready for the mocks and I thank you in advance for the support you offer at home. The head student team have published a survival booklet which can be found [here](#) on our website.

Like many schools in the South West, a number of our students and staff have contracted Covid since we returned from the summer break. Whilst the number of students out with Covid at the moment is less than in many similar schools we remain vigilant and continue to operate our control measures. Internal spaces are ventilated and hand sanitiser is readily available. We have asked students and staff to wear face coverings when moving about inside the school where social distancing is not possible, although this is not required in the classrooms. Of course, people are welcome to wear face coverings in the classrooms should they choose to do so. As the weather is now turning cooler, students may wish to wear an additional white T shirt under their school shirt if they are finding some of the ventilated spaces a bit chilly. The heating is on in school, and most areas are perfectly comfortable, but some feel the cold more than others. I thank you for your understanding and support.

Teachers have been posting their class materials on Teams so that students can access the work after the lesson should they wish or to enable them to take part if they are absent from school. Indeed, the posted material does give students an extra resource when preparing for internal assessments.

Departments continue to offer academic support at lunchtime in the form of informal drop-ins. This week, for example, the Science team have been running re-test opportunities for year 12 and next week, the mathematics team will be offering sessions to give students the chance to clear up any misconceptions following the first round of assessments. As always, should your child experience difficulty with their study, they should discuss it with their teacher who will be more than happy to help.

From the middle of November, we plan to open Bertha's 15 minutes before the start of lunch to enable sixth form students who do not have a lesson to purchase their food early. Our hope is that this will further reduce queuing for students by staggering the serving times. Understandably, we will not be permitting students to leave class early to buy their lunch.

Our Earth Alliance student leadership group are keen to give our students a voice regarding the COP26 summit. At PHSG we are committed to ensuring that students should have the chance to be heard. I will be meeting with the Earth Alliance student leaders to find a way for students to take part on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> November in an awareness raising activity. The activity will be on school grounds and within school times and celebrated via our website and social media platforms. Students can choose to take part of they wish.

Our Sixth Form open evening is scheduled to take place on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> November. We will be operating a booking system just as we did for the year 6 open evening and families can book via our website where more information can be found.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Very best wishes,



**Simon Underdown.**  
**Headteacher.**