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26th March 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

This will be my last letter before Easter. A brief reminder that term finishes on Thursday 1st April at 3.00pm, we hope everyone has a good and well-deserved break.

It has been an exceptional term, starting with a rapid move into a national lockdown in January and a return to remote learning for all. We were delighted when the plan to resume school in early March was confirmed. We had increasing concerns about the wellbeing of many students and the levels of isolation they were experiencing. The students have been remarkably resilient in their return to school. Attendance has been extremely good and students have adjusted and settled quickly. I am very grateful to my colleagues for their hard work in adapting to online learning, delivering live lessons and then returning to the classroom. It all appeared seamless but behind these actions lurked fears and concerns about potential infection in school. What marked our staff out was the overwhelming belief that we had to do the right thing and that learning, and school, had to resume. School feels like it is back to normal with laughter and the buzz of busy spaces again. Our equilibrium has returned.

We have been interviewing at school for the last two days looking for a new Deputy Headteacher to start in September 2021. I am delighted to tell you that we have appointed Miss Marlborough to the school. She was the outstanding candidate from a very strong field of applicants. She brings significant experience of leading school improvement and has made a really positive impact in her current and previous school. We anticipate great things from her.

Next week all students will be given further home testing kits. The expectation, for the foreseeable future, is that home testing will continue. As before, we ask that you keep us informed of any positive tests that emerge and the subsequent action that needs to be followed (students will need to isolate and take a PCR test if a lateral flow test result from home is positive).

We have been made aware that parents and carers may apply for a discretionary payment (a test and trace support payment) if you have to self-isolate. Please follow this link to read about eligibility criteria <u>Test and Trace Support Payment</u>.

The summer term resumes on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> April. We finish for the half term break on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> May, having re-positioned our last inset day on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> May (to help manage the marking and standardisation of final assessments for Year 11 and Year 13 students).

Yours faithfully

Mr M Brown Headteacher









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