

26 March 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we end the first fortnight of the return to school-based provision, I would like to thank you for your support throughout one of the most unusual and most challenging terms in our memory.

Since their return, our pupils have shown an outstanding approach to the arrangements for keeping them safe and have engaged with these readily. Their maturity and their adaptability in terms of all of the ways of working have been exceptional.

It has been a spectacularly busy term right from the outset with excellent engagement in online learning, with increasing numbers accessing childcare, with the return to school on the 15th March and with the release very recently of key details regarding the Centre Determined Grade (CDG) process, the process by which our pupils in Years 11-13 will be awarded their qualifications this year. Further information on this is provided overleaf.

It also has been a term throughout which the extra-curricular project introduced by Hollywood actor, Michael Sheen, back in January has run, with the 'Journeys into the Imagination' project offering activities and challenges alongside the staff narration of Tolkien's 'The Hobbit' three times a week. If your child has not been involved in this, he or she can access all materials here <http://bit.ly/JourneysTeam2021> and might enjoy doing so during the Easter break. The project ends this evening with the narration of the final chapter, although all materials remain accessible. I am grateful to my colleagues for their participation in this project and I hope that your children have enjoyed hearing from teachers and support staff in this way; we have been very impressed by our pupils' engagement in the project.

We look forward to welcoming all year groups back to school for the Summer term. Monday 12th April has been designated by Welsh Government as a planning day for schools and amongst secondary schools this will typically be used to engage in staff training on the newly released detail surrounding the Centre Determined Grades process. This means that pupils will, for the most part, return to school on Tuesday 13th April. The exception to this will be Year 11. Our Year 11 pupils experienced a bubble closure within just a few days of their return to school this term and we have been allowed to bring this year group back immediately in recognition of both this and in the context of their forthcoming assessments for Centre Determined Grades. The arrangements therefore are that:

- Year 11 will return to school on Monday 12th April
- Years 7, 8, 9, 10, 12 and 13 will return to school on Tuesday 13th April

School transport will be available on Monday 12th April to all Year 11 pupils that normally use it. Catering provision also resumes in school next term.

For parents and carers of pupils in Years 11-13:

With regard to the previously mentioned CDG process, all pupils in Years 11-13 were provided with an assembly this morning which they can access at any time via the 'Whole School Assemblies' Team and also in their year group Teams. This outlined the process clearly, and is supplemented by parental information here: <http://bit.ly/CDGInformationForParents>. We would encourage all of our pupils involved in this process to watch the narrated assembly if they have not done so as it provides reassurance about the nature of this process as well as the key information that will support effective engagement in it.

We want the very best for our pupils and we recognise that, following the disruptions that there have been in the past year, that this is achieved through a paced and balanced approach that reduces anxiety. As stated previously, our pupils' resilience and adaptability has been nothing short of exceptional and we are all united as their teachers in supporting them in these next important steps – gaining the qualifications that recognise their resilience and their achievement.

In addition to the pupil and parent overviews described and linked above, every subject Team will contain further information about the mini-assessments which will help us in gathering evidence of your child's attainment and we ask that you encourage your child to continue to access these Teams as they have been doing, and to ask any questions that they may have. We will be very happy to answer them.

I wish you and your families a happy and blessed Easter, a restful break and continued good health –

Yours faithfully,



Mrs E Pole
Headteacher