

Our Ref: AGA/CHO

15 January 2021

Dear Parents



I hope that you are all well and managing to cope with the ongoing demands of the current situation.

Thanks

Last Friday after a particularly busy week I was overwhelmed by the number of lovely messages that I received from parents. Many of you wrote to me to express your appreciation of all that had been done to enable your daughters to continue to learn at home despite the circumstances. Your feedback is never taken for granted and is very much appreciated.

Remote Learning

We monitor very closely the engagement with remote learning of all of our pupils and Sixth Form students. Last week this was excellent. Pupils are clearly adapting well to the changes we have made to how remote learning is delivered. We will continue to monitor and adapt according to the feedback we get from staff, pupils and parents. One of the things we have picked up on this week is that, although live lessons are very good in some ways, there can also be too much of this method of learning and, therefore, too much screen time. I have asked staff to ensure that their lessons are a mix of activities both on screen and off and that a balance is essential especially given the fact we have no idea how long this will continue. Over the next few weeks we will also put times in where pupils do not look at screens, but are required to go off and do another activity for a lesson. This could be a physical activity or reading a book or maybe even doing something around the house to help you out. We will also be sending a parent questionnaire over the next week or so to gain your views on how remote learning is going.

Parents' Evenings

The majority of our parents' evenings will take place this term. For those of you yet to have yours, they will take place using a software package called SchoolCloud. We have used this system twice so far although we have had a few teething problems (issues with the system rather than Upton issues). Further details about how to book appointments will be sent closer to the time of the actual evening.

Covid testing consent

Linked to this letter is the consent form for Covid testing. I would be very grateful if you could complete this as soon as possible. Even though our mass testing programme is some time off (and may not happen as the regulator MHRA have yet to approve it), we will endeavour to have all of the paperwork in place in advance to make the system more efficient when we come to it. Please click on this link and complete the form.

[Covid Consent Form](#)

Parents watching lessons and safeguarding

This is just a polite reminder to parents that online lessons are for your daughters and not for yourselves. There have been occasions where parents have been live on screen to some lessons. This can be a little disconcerting to staff and to other children and may make pupils feel inhibited about participating in lessons.

Year 11 - A level taster lessons

These were due to take place this week but we have now put them back to next Friday. Details of how to access these lessons will be sent directly to your daughters.

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GCSE/A level examinations

We still await further guidance from the DfE and Ofqual about how grades will be awarded later this year. Our advice still stands that pupils in Year 11 and Sixth Form students should continue to work hard. It is very likely that the data we need in order to set grades has yet to be generated from assessments and this will come at some time in the future. You may have seen letters between Ofqual and the Education Secretary discussing the possibility of externally assessed 'mini-exams'. This underlines the importance of students continuing to work and be prepared for any decision.

As another lockdown weekend is upon us, I hope you and your families will all take the necessary precautions to keep yourselves safe and healthy.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A Gaunt', with a horizontal line extending from the end of the signature.

Mrs A Gaunt
HEADMISTRESS