

1st November 2021

Dear Parents / Carers

Welcome Back!

I hope you have all enjoyed a wonderful half term break. Whilst I am notoriously not a fan of cold weather, I cannot help but enjoy the striking beauty of the autumn palette as we step into November. With so many celebrations, concerts and events planned for this half term, our overarching aim is to continue to provide enriching learning in the classroom and through wider opportunities that we know have such a positive impact on our students' wellbeing. Our staff have been wonderfully enthusiastic, as ever, in ensuring that, regardless of the challenges we face, this remains the lived experience of our students.

COVID-19 Update

As we all know, Covid-19 remains a presence in our communities and we remain continuously cautious around this. Thank you for your support with the reintroduction of masks in the last two weeks of the last half term: we are always so grateful for your responsiveness. Though we are not enforcing masks immediately upon our return this half term, we ask that you ensure that your child has a mask available to them at school at all times in case they are in a situation where wearing them is a sensible precaution. Students and staff who wish to wear masks at any point may, of course, do so. It was pleasant to see so many of our students with these as they arrived this morning.

We will monitor transmission on a day to day basis and act swiftly with the full reintroduction of masks should we need to. At all times, we work with the local Health Protection Team to ensure that we are following recommended procedures. I would like to take this opportunity to remind you that our three main mitigation measures in school are: lateral flow testing, ventilation and hygiene. Whilst these are not onerous, if we all adhere to them, they clearly make a difference.

Vaccinations

In my previous letter to you, I confirmed that COVID vaccinations would be taking place at the school on **Friday 12th November** and **Monday 15th November**. Information about the vaccination programme, along with E-



Consent forms, has now been shared with all parents and carers via Edulink. Please do take the time to read the frequently asked questions that accompanied the information that has been circulated.

Young Writers Empowered Poetry competition

After a very, very busy first half term, I cannot tell you the joy I felt when Mrs Skirrow, Specialist Leader of Education for English, gifted me a wonderfully weighty booklet full of our students' 'Young Writers' poetry competition entries. The competition invited students to write about something they cared about, or were passionate about, to give advice or share a memory, or to simply write about something then loved. The closing date for the Young Writers competition is Friday 5th November and students can still enter this online here: <https://www.youngwriters.co.uk/competitions/KS3-4/empowered>

We will be announcing the winners of our internal competition very shortly. With contributions from every single year group, we would like to say very well done to everyone that took part. It was an impressive range of poems that were heart-warming in so many differing ways. Some brought a smile, some a sense of sorrow and others an opportunity to reflect on what growing up feels like for our students right now. Every single one of them was a pleasure to read!

Back on the Rack

As part of our ongoing work towards gaining an 'Eco-Schools Green Flag' status, the NSG Eco-Council, under the expert guidance of Miss Oldham, have been focusing on 'fast fashion' in order to highlight the problems associated with it. Fast fashion uses cheap materials to churn out clothing collections at a rapid pace and samples ideas from fashion shows and celebrity culture and turns them into garments available online and in stores almost overnight. It is easy to see the appeal but the problems associated with it are not always immediately visible. For example, besides the sheer bulk of waste in landfills, fast fashion has an impact on the environment through carbon emissions.

NSG's 'Back on the Rack' event, which takes place at NSG on **Tuesday 2nd November**, aims to change students' perspectives on retail and to showcase what charity shops and buying second hand has to offer, demonstrating how an item of clothing can have multiple lives, with multiple owners.

We are delighted to have the Mayor of Northampton joining us to open this launch event and the BBC coming to film and speak to our Eco-Council about it also. We will be sharing photographs and links to footage from the event on our Instagram and Facebook pages. Thank you to the Eco-Council and to Miss Oldham for their impressive efforts in organising this event. We are so proud of the contributions our students make to shaping a better future.



Royal Albert Hall

We are consistently in awe of the talents of our students and, this week, several of them have been invited to perform at the Royal Albert Hall as part of the 'Music for Youth Prom 2021'. The Prom will feature a creative project led by composer Tim Steiner, and will include performances to support and encourage young musicians and music educators as they restart, rebuild and reboot live music making post-lockdown. Being selected to attend is an impressive achievement for our students and we are exceptionally proud of them.

Common Ability Testing

We are delighted to have received an extraordinary number of applications for places to join our Year 7 cohort in September 2022. As in previous years, we are heavily oversubscribed, therefore students applying for a place at NSG will need to sit the Common Ability Test, to allow the school to operate the Fair Banding process in accordance with our Admissions Policy.

This year, the testing process will take place online on **Saturday 13th November 2021**. Further information will be sent out this week to all applicants regarding test times and procedures. If you have a child that is taking the test, please remind them that this test does not require any preparation or revision – we encourage them not to worry; it is certainly not a test that is pass or fail. We will also be sharing information on **Wednesday 3rd November** on our website here: <https://www.nsg.northants.sch.uk/school/admissions>

Sporting Roundup!

It has been hugely exciting starting the new school year with the ability to offer competitive school sport at NSG for the first time in many months. We are extremely proud of our sports facilities, classroom and fitness suite, which alongside the astro turf, netball courts and extensive outdoor space allows us to teach, learn, train and compete in high quality surroundings. We would like to say a special congratulations to Mrs Tarlton, Head of the Sports and Performing Arts Faculty, who qualified as an archery instructor during the half term break achieving - to nobody's surprise at school - full marks in the assessment!

The positive atmosphere and genuine buzz from students and staff alike has been lovely to experience and seeing busy groups and hearing of strong performances is what we all thrive on. Do remember to follow us on twitter **@NSG_pe** for regular results and updates if you do not already do so.

With best wishes,



Mrs Cristina Taboada-Naya
Headteacher

