

21<sup>st</sup> December 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

It truly has been another exceptionally busy term and I am thankful to all our students for the tenacity and resilience they have continued to show. As I reflect on my communication to you at this time last year, I recall, with optimism, hoping that we would all now be looking back at the pandemic from a more comfortable distance. We are certainly not quite at that stage yet.

Last week, Mrs Carré, Deputy Headteacher, shared a letter with you outlining the details of the dates for return for each of our year groups in January. These dates have been staggered to enable us to carry out onsite Lateral Flow Testing in accordance with government guidelines. If there are any further changes to this as a result of changes to government guidance and guidelines, I will communicate this to you as soon as possible.

### Foodbank Appeal

Last week our school community came together, as always, to help others in our locality. Our annual Food Bank charity event, which this year took place on Thursday 16 December, was a tremendous success and we were overwhelmed by the donations of food and toiletries which equated to thousands and thousands of pounds. I am pleased to confirm that all the donations were safely transported to the local Food Bank and very gratefully received. I would like to offer a special thanks to the Sixth Form Student Leadership Team who supported the organisation and promotion of the event so diligently and to the wider Sixth Form community for helping to gather the mountains of donations and, of course to all of you for your kind donations and support for the event.

### Christmas Concerts

I am pleased to say that we were able to continue with both of our planned Christmas Concerts this year and both evenings were a true success. It was wonderful to see all the students showcasing their talents: they were superb! I must confess, however, that it was the Year 7 choirs, on both evenings, that melted my heart with their rendition of 'When I grow up' from Matilda the Musical, closely followed by an exceptional performance from 'Madrigalis', who also performed at Northampton Cathedral later in the week. Thank you to all the staff that supported both of these events, particularly to those that stepped in at short notice to cover staff absence.

### NSG Awards Evening

Although we are in many ways a very vibrant and modern school, the NSG Awards Evening is steeped in tradition and has taken place annually at our school for several decades. This year, the Awards Evening took place on Monday 10 December and provided an opportunity for us to collectively celebrate the achievements of our incredible students, recognising that they have continued to achieve so much in spite of the many challenges that the pandemic has created, and as we can see continues to send our way on a daily basis.

Regardless of their differing achievements and interests, all the students that received awards have something very special in common: they are exceptionally committed, they are tenacious and they are absolutely fearless in



their pursuit for excellence, striving for success, whatever that might look like for them on an individual level. Congratulations to everyone that received an award!

### Final thoughts...

As we head into the very last few hours of this term, I wanted to reflect, briefly, on the last twelve months. You will have noted from my many letters to you, and will have heard me say before, however hard this is (and it has been very difficult for so much of the time), our staff have never stopped, not once, to put your children first. And, you have never stopped supporting us to do that - thank you. We value that enormously.

Throughout this, we have been constant in our reminders to our students to persevere and, as hard as it sometimes is, to see beyond *these* moments because *these* moments will pass and their futures will be so much greater than just *these* moments. And, crucially, we will be with them each step of the way - regardless of what the world throws at them, or us.

On behalf of all the staff and governors of the school, I want to wish you all a safe and happy festive break and look forward to welcoming our students back in the New Year.

With every good wish to you and your families,



**Cristina Taboada-Naya**  
Headteacher

