

8th December 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

With just under two weeks to go before the end of term, the Christmas tree is up in the theatre and the unmistakable crispness of winter is finally upon us; the pavements on the way into school are becoming increasingly slippery and I would like to remind you to ensure that your children are wearing sensible footwear and are wrapped up warm as the days get inevitably colder over the coming weeks. I would encourage students to ensure they are wearing their school jumpers beneath their blazers. Hoodies are not an acceptable part of the school uniform and students should ensure that they remove these before arriving at tutor time. I want to request your continued support with ensuring your child is wearing the correct school uniform. After a long period of working from home, we are keen to develop and maintain the high expectations around this. Mrs Boddy will be writing to all parents and carers with a further reminder of the expectations of school uniform.

Arrangements in the event of adverse weather conditions

Last week, the scattering of snow reminded me to inform new parents about how we communicate with you in the event of having to close the school due to snow. If we experience dangerous and adverse weather conditions, announcements are made on the school's website and across our social media channels. If there is a fall of snow overnight leading to a morning decision, we will publish this as soon as possible and no later than 8:00am. In the event of the school having to close in the middle of the day, all parents and carers will be contacted, school transport adjusted and the Senior Leadership Team will wait with any child who is unable to get home.

Ofsted Inspection Update

As you will already be aware, it has been a very busy few weeks at our school, particularly with the visit from Ofsted who conducted a routine inspection of the school on Tuesday 30th November and Wednesday 1st December. We are now awaiting the final report to be shared with the school and, in turn, I will share this with you as soon as I am able to. The outcome of the report remains confidential until all the quality assurance checks are completed by Ofsted. I would like to say a sincere thank you to everyone who completed the Ofsted Parent View survey last week. It was invaluable to have your support and we will continue to use your feedback to help us to improve.

Foodbank Appeal

Our students are as busy as ever supporting local and national charities and earlier this week you will have received a letter from the Sixth Form Leadership Team informing you that on **Thursday 9th December** we have our annual non-school uniform day in support of the local Food Bank. Students will be allowed to wear their own



clothes in return for a donation of an item of food, or several, from the list provided. The items collected will be donated to Northampton Food Bank, which supports local people and families. Last year we donated thousands of pounds worth of food and we hope to do the same again. We thank you in advance for your support with this charitable endeavour.

COVID-19 Update

In keeping with previous COVID-19 updates, I would like to inform you that the DfE updated the 'Addendum: recording attendance in relation to coronavirus (COVID-19) during the 2021 to 2022 academic year.' The section on 'pupils who are a close contact of someone who has symptoms or confirmed COVID-19' has been amended to reflect the arrangements for the Omicron variant and makes clear that **individuals who have been identified as a close contact of a suspected or confirmed case of the Omicron variant of COVID-19, irrespective of vaccination status and age, will be contacted directly, required to self-isolate immediately and asked to book a PCR test.**

Individuals will be informed by the local health protection team or NHS Test and Trace if they fall into this category and provided with details about self-isolation.

Students are not required to self-isolate if they live in the same household as someone with COVID-19 who is not a suspected or confirmed case of the Omicron variant, or are a close contact of someone with COVID-19 who is not a suspected or confirmed case of the Omicron variant, and any of the following apply:

- they are fully vaccinated
- they are below the age of 18 years and 6 months
- they have taken part in or are currently part of an approved COVID-19 vaccine trial
- they are not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons

Events and COVID restrictions

Looking ahead to events before Christmas, it is our aim to continue our usual activities. However, to do this we need to be cautious and keep monitoring the situation and for live events taking place in Spinney Theatre we are asking parents, carers and visitors to wear masks in the audience, and are asking the same of students and staff also.

Musical Events

Our musicians have been busy rehearsing for the Christmas concerts which take place this evening, Wednesday 8th December and tomorrow, Thursday 9th December. It has been lovely to hear the sound of singing coming out of so many windows during lunch times and the exceptional standard of musical performance.

The Christmas concert comes hot on the heels of the student-led 'Academy' performance last week which was, quite simply, excellent; it is quite extraordinary how students have learned so much repertoire in such a short time and serves as a constant reminder of the consistent excellence they demonstrate in their personal development.



We will shortly be sharing more information with you about the performance of Billy Elliot the Musical, which takes place in February 2022 - the rehearsals are already demonstrating that this will be an exceptional performance and we hope many of you will be able to attend the performance.

Awards Evening

We are absolutely delighted, after two years of absence, to be once again hosting the Northampton School for Girls' Award Ceremony. These awards are based on the academic year 2020-21. Our highly prestigious Awards Evening takes place on **Monday 13th December** and begins at **7:00pm**. I would like to offer my sincerest congratulations to all students receiving an award. This is a recognition of excellence and commitment to the culture and ethos of our school.

I would like to gently remind attendees that doors will be opened to guests at **6.30pm** precisely, when they will be invited into Spinney Theatre foyer, where they can enjoy live music performed by our students and light refreshments, which will also be available to purchase on the evening. As part of our preventative measures, we will not be allowing visitors into the theatre ahead of this time. Thank you for your patience and support with this.

End of term arrangements

I would like to remind you that the last day of term is **Tuesday 21st December**; students will have normal lessons in the morning followed by some time in their tutor bases. As in previous years, students will be dismissed at the earlier time of 1:30pm on that day and the school buses will leave at approximately 1:45pm.

Students travelling on the late bus will leave school at 3:00pm. Students who normally travel on the late buses may leave at 1:30pm, but will have to make their own way home or be collected by parents or carers.

We request that you sign the slip below to confirm you have given permission for your child to leave at 1:30pm

The school will reopen to students on **Thursday 6th January 2022**. However, it is our intention to stagger the return of students to school in order to facilitate the Lateral Flow Testing that will be taking place upon our return. We will provide further information about this next week to ensure you have the full details of this.

With very best wishes,



Cristina Taboada-Naya
Headteacher



Please return this slip to your tutor by Wednesday 15th December 2021

Student name: **Tutor Group:**

- I give permission for my child to leave school at **1:30pm** on **Tuesday 21st December 2021** and to make her own way home / travel on her usual school bus.
- or**
- I would like my child to remain at school until **3:00pm** on **Tuesday 21st December 2021**.

Please indicate your preference above

Signed: (Parent /Carer) Dated:

