



February 2021

Dear Family,

As we reach the end of another Half Term of remote learning I would like to take the opportunity to thank the students who have worked so hard during lockdown, the staff for all their efforts and you, the families for supporting students' learning and wellbeing through this challenging time.

We have been consistently impressed with the standard of work produced by many of our students and the seriousness in which they have taken their studies. Over the past 6 weeks we have tried to take your feedback on board by introducing our 'Friday Catchup' and 'Wellbeing Wednesday' programmes which we intend to keep running after Half Term.

Return to School and Learning Next Half Term

At the moment we do not yet have a firm date for the return of students. We do know two things. Firstly, that on February 22nd the Government are setting out a roadmap which should include dates for a return to the Academy. Secondly, that this is not likely to be before March 8th, two weeks into the next half term. The numbers of cases in the country are coming down and the vaccination programme is going well but Sandwell has consistently been in the top 5 Local Authorities for numbers of infections and this could impact our return. The moment we hear anything we will inform families.

Free School Meals

For those families receiving Free School meals, we have entered the Council's winter food scheme to provide an additional voucher to cover the half term period. You should have received notification by text and the voucher come to you by email in the next few days.

Password Safety

At a briefing with West Midlands Police yesterday, it was revealed that a number of local schools have had online lessons hacked with people from outside the Academy and there have been incidences of abuse and obscene images shown.

We have been fortunate that the way we run our lessons has prevented this in our Academy. We would remind all students going online that these things have real life consequences and in other schools it has led to both arrests and exclusions. The lessons were compromised by students' passwords being shared on social media so please make they keep them secure.

Wellbeing Wednesdays

24th February – Paper Engineering

For the next Wellbeing Wednesday afternoon students can take part in a variety of craft, design and engineering challenges involving being creative with paper. All instructions will be provided, students will just need access to some sheets of paper.



3rd March - World Book Day

The afternoon of Wednesday 3rd March will be dedicated to World Book Day, which is actually held on the 4th March. If students would like to dress up as a book character and send a photo to their Form Teacher to feature in our gallery, they can although there is no obligation. There will be a selection of activities and challenges, including a quiz, which the children can choose from and some live reading they can listen to as well.

Maths Messages from Miss Richards

For those involved with the Junior Maths Competition, there is no Junior Maths Session during half term. The first session back will be Monday 22nd February from 3:30pm - 4:30pm, a link will be sent to all students participating on Sunday 21st February. Keep an eye out for the next set of the monthly Maths Challenges going live this Monday via the Year 7 and 8 Maths Subject Hub Sites.

Century

All Year 7 students have been sent an email with their Century username and password. A reminder to Year 8 students – your username is your academy email address and the password is **century**

All students should change their password when they first log in. Maths and Science courses have been set up for all students that they can work through independently and Year 8 have also been assigned a course on Romeo and Juliet. At the moment, Century is available for extension and enrichment and can be used by students as much as they like, in addition to timetabled live lessons. We will be setting activities as part of lessons soon.

Catch-up

A number of families may have been contacted regarding your child and missing work. While it is important for everyone to have a break over half term, if your child has lots of work that they have been asked to complete it will help them to do little bits often, so that they can begin the new term with everything up to date. Staff will do everything they can to support the students to complete their work but will also be in need of a break and time to catch up.

Finally

It just remains for me to say stay safe over Half Term, the virus is still out there but we are starting to see some light at the end of the tunnel. I wish you all a restful break and hope that we will be back together soon.

Yours sincerely

George Faux
Principal