



December 2021

End of Term Letter

Dear Family

Even though we again approach uncertain times this Christmas, it has been wonderful to have a term with all the students back, in our new buildings, with many wonderful moments throughout the term.

These have included, trips to the Hippodrome, visits to Wembley Stadium, Sandwell College, Warwick Castle, Birmingham University and lots of visitors in the Academy to give students rich experiences. We have had a full suite of clubs and societies from chess club to business club, music to sports.

Our sports teams have also been tremendously successful at both netball and football with notable victories and the students doing fantastically well in the leagues.

It has not just been about the trips and experiences, there has been lots of hard work throughout the years both in lessons and in our catchup sessions. Assessment 1 Progress Reports will be sent home to you with students on Wednesday so that you can gauge your child's progress so far.

End of Term

Term will end at **12:40pm on Friday 17th December 2021**. Students who normally receive a free school meal can take a grab bag from the canteen. Students will be asked to indicate if they wish to take one in a form to ensure we have no waste. Please check your email and complete the online form by Wednesday 15th December at 3pm.

Return to the Academy

Students should return to the Academy on **Tuesday 4th January 2021**.

The government have asked us to carry out covid tests on all students on their return to the Academy. We will be doing this in the sports hall which will be sanitised between each session. We will do this using the covid test consent lists that we have for all students.

This will mean a staggered start for the day.

Year 9 will start at the normal time of 8:45am

Year 8 will start at 10:00am

Year 7 will start at 11:15am

We apologise for the staggered start but it is the only way for us to prevent students mixing before they are tested after the holidays. If you wish to change your testing preference please email the Academy by 1:00pm on **Thursday 16th December 2021**.

Academy Christmas Dinner

Last year a number of people mentioned that they would have had the Christmas Dinner in the canteen if they had known it was on. We will be serving Christmas Dinner (Roast and Vegetarian) on **Wednesday 15th December**. The menu will be emailed to you and has been posted on the Student Portal for children to review.

Trussell Trust Collection

Throughout the last few weeks we have been collecting items for food banks run by the Trussell Trust. These will be handed over on Friday and we have been overwhelmed by the generosity of our families looking to support those in challenging circumstances this Christmas. If you wish to donate then the last day is Thursday as our site team will be taking all donations in the minibus on Friday morning.

Covid

Sadly, the Omicron variant is now becoming an issue across the country. At the moment we are keeping with our current restrictions of masks in corridors and communal areas, twice weekly lateral flow testing and hand sanitisers round the Academy. However, things change rapidly and if the government publish any further advice we will send this out via email and publish on our website to all families.

New advice is that any students identified as a close contact should take daily lateral flow tests, which, if negative, mean students can still attend the Academy. However, if students have any symptoms or a positive lateral flow then they should get a PCR test and self-isolate.

This is a changing situation that is largely out of our control and we await further government advice.

Free School Meals Vouchers

The council are again providing vouchers for students who normally receive free school meals. These should come by e-mail and be to the value of £30 per child.

Parking

With poorer weather we are seeing increasing numbers of students being dropped off. Again, I would ask people to only drop students in the marked spaces in the drop off zone or the car park and not on the entrance road to these areas. There are two lanes and stopping in one is dangerous; it also backs up traffic onto the main road. Please accept it may take 5 minutes to complete the process of dropping off your child, especially if you are dropping them off right before the bell which can be a very busy time.

I would also ask parents not to drop off in the disabled areas; we have had a number of

complaints from blue badge holders who have been unable to drop off students with mobility issues.

Final Message

We live in uncertain times but this year I would like to take the opportunity to say thank you to our students. Whenever we have been challenged by Covid or restrictions they have been positive, compliant and risen to the challenge. They have been strong and resilient and having them back in the Academy has made it a place of many fantastic moments throughout the year.

I would like to say thank you to our staff who have worked tirelessly to give the students great experiences and keep them safe and happy.

Finally, to our families I say thank you for your support throughout the year and your partnership with us to encourage the students' education. I wish you all a Merry Christmas and hope we will all have a wonderful 2022.

Yours sincerely



George Faux
Principal