



Pittville School
Cheltenham

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Headteacher Richard Gilpin

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Dear Parents /Carers

I hope this letter finds you and your families well. I would like to thank parents and carers for their continued support this term. It has been great to see students engaging in some of the festivities in school this week. Years 7 and 8 watched a professional drama company perform a panto and this afternoon the whole school watched the traditional staff panto in their tutor rooms. My thanks go to the Year 7 students who dressed our Christmas tree. I have missed the Christmas lunch and our Carol Service. I am already looking forward to next year.

I thought I would take the opportunity to write to you to ahead of our return to school in January. Included in this communication are some key points that I would like to highlight to parents/carers and students. Please note our expectations that students wear cycling helmets if they are cycling to school. I have attached our cycling permit expectations for your information.

Start of Term

You may well have seen the announcement this afternoon about a staggered start to next term. This is the first that we have heard about this and at the moment I have no details about this planned phased return to school. I will write to you as soon as I have further information. We will also write to remind parents and students about how to access remote learning. It might be worth parents and students just reminding themselves of our remote learning provision by looking at the remote learning section of the school website. There are useful videos and other information under 'Tier B' provision.

Changes in staffing

We say goodbye to Mr Scognamiglio (Spanish teacher) who leaves who for a new adventure. I would like to thank Mr Scognamiglio for all he has contributed to the school. We send our best wishes for the future. We welcome Mrs Godding and Mr Forsythe (English teachers) and Mrs Pryce and Ms Allen (Modern Foreign Languages teachers)

Changes to Tutor Group arrangements

The following teachers will be taking charge of these tutor groups from January:

9AB2 - Mrs Godding/Miss Clements
7AB2 - Mr Forsythe
10Li3 - Mrs Pryce and Ms Allen

Face Masks

Can I remind parents/carers of the expectation that all students arrive at school each day with a suitable mask.

Attitude to Learning Grade Cards

ATL grade cards for term two for all year groups will be published week beginning 5th January 2021.

Year 11 News

Well done to Year 11 on completing their mock examinations. The exams have now been marked and fed back to students. We look forward to discussing these results with parents and students at the forthcoming parents' evening. We are pleased with how hard Year 11 students are working and look forward to them achieving well in the summer examinations.

Last week Year 11 took part in a careers day preparing for their post-16 options. Throughout this term important information and dates have been posted on SMHW and we have also set up a TEAM for 11 students so they can access



careers information and links from one site. A video link for parents will be emailed out shortly with up to date information about post-16 options, advice on choosing where to go next and useful weblinks. We are also exploring whether we can offer some careers advice remotely during the Year 11 parents evenings.

Examinations in the Summer

The DfE has confirmed that examinations are definitely going ahead in the summer for Year 11. More details about the materials that will be examined is due to be released at the end of January. In the coming days we will be sending out a document which we hope will be of use to both students and parents.

Remote Parents' Evenings

Next term we will host virtual parents' evenings as follows:

- Year 9 13th and 14th January
- Year 11 27th and 28th January
- Year 7 10th and 11th February
- Year 10 24th and 25th February

These events will offer an opportunity for parents to discuss the progress their son/daughter has made thus far. We are using online software known as 'School Cloud' to host this virtual event. Parents will be sent guidance for logging on and using the software in the New Year.

Uniform

As the weather becomes colder, it is right that students are choosing to wear extra layers. Please support our efforts to keep high standards with our uniform. Hoodies are not part of school uniform and therefore should NOT be worn to school. If the weather is cold, we encourage students to wear thin layers which cannot be seen underneath the uniform in addition to a normal coat when necessary. A plain black V neck jumper may be worn underneath blazers. All non-school jumpers/sweatshirts etc are not allowed. Students should wear coats over their blazers (they can keep them on in lessons as the colder weather develops). Hoodies/sweatshirts and coats must not be worn underneath their blazers. Jewellery should be one single small stud per ear and if make-up is worn it needs to be discreet and natural looking. Nail varnish and/or false nails are not to be worn to school.

The journey to and from school-respect for local residents

We have the highest expectations of how students behave on the way to and from school. I am always pleased with the number of local residents who compliment us on the behaviour of our students in the local community. Could I please ask parents/carers to reinforce our high expectations of how students should conduct themselves on the journey to and from school.

Students gathering in Pittville Park

We have had some concerns raised about younger students (Year 7 and 8) gathering in the Pittville park play area before school begins in the morning. We do not feel that it is appropriate or safe for students to do this. Students should make their way straight to school in the morning and not wait in the park area.

Contacting School over Christmas to report a positive case of Covid 19

The Government has also issued guidance on reporting a Covid case in the six days leading up to Christmas. I have been asked by the DfE to share this advice to all parents:

- Where a pupil or staff member tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), having developed symptoms more than 48 hours since being in school, the school should not be contacted. Parents and carers should follow contact tracing instructions provided by NHS Test and Trace.
- For the first 6 days after teaching ends, if a pupil or staff member tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), having developed symptoms within 48 hours of being in school, the school is asked to assist in identifying close contacts and advising self-isolation, as the individual may have been infectious whilst in school.
- Advice from the Local Authority is to encourage parents to get drive in tests as much as possible, if they are in any doubt.
- To that effect we would ask that should you need to contact school to report a positive case up to and including Wednesday 23 December that you do so through the following channels by emailing covid@pittville.gloucs.sch.uk or by phoning 07593 443243 or 07394 567630 between the hours of 10 am and 1 pm. From Thursday 24th onwards you should follow the Government test and trace guidance. Please see attached link: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-test-and-trace-how-it-works>

Behaviour

As headteacher I have the full support of school governors in setting out clear boundaries for all students. Students who fail to meet these expectations can expect to be dealt with in accordance with our policy. All parents/carers who send their children to Pittville agree to sign up to our policies and I ask for your continued support in maintaining our very high expectations of student behaviour.

Lateness

Please can I remind parents of the importance of punctuality at school. All parents have a responsibility to ensure their children arrive at school for their allocated start time. Due to our new staggered starts students will be deemed late if they arrive 5 minutes after their allocated time. Therefore, if the start time is 8.25, students arriving after 8.30 will be deemed late. Students with an 8.35 start time, arriving after 8.40 will be deemed late. We will continue to use our 'roll-call' system for our morning registration. This means that all students will be expected to be standing at their allocated place in their tutor group at their allocated time ready to answer their name on the register. Any student who is not present for roll-call and does not have a valid reason for being late will be issued with a 30-minute detention after school the same day. Should this be the case we will phone/email you to let you know. All school gates will be locked at 8.40 and anyone arriving after this time will need to access the school through the main gate reporting to main reception.

Equipment

Daily equipment checks to make sure that all students have the basic equipment with them and are prepared for the school day, will continue in January as they have done so this year. This stops teachers from providing equipment on a regular basis to the small number of students who do not bring everything they need. Students will be required to have a pen, pencil, ruler and their school planner. Students will have to bring their own equipment and packs to use. It is crucial that students come to school fully equipped and ready to learn. It is no longer practical to borrow equipment from friends or members of staff if an item is forgotten. Students should bring to school two pens, two pencils, a ruler, a rubber and a calculator.

Students must not bring any unnecessary items into school. Students will not be able to leave personal belongings or school equipment in their tutor room during the course of the school day. Access to lockers will be limited due to the introduction of the whole-school, one-way system.

Health and Safety

We ask that students bring tissues to school so that they can cover their mouths if they cough or sneeze. If students have sanitiser they should bring this to school and apply it at regular intervals. They will also be able to continue to use school-supplied sanitiser in addition to washing their hands with soap and water in the toilets.

Students Cycling to School

I am delighted that we have so many students who are choosing to cycle to school. Students must be careful when leaving school at the end of the day and when cycling on the main roads around the school. Students agree to cycle safely when they apply for a cycle permit. Students who are found to be cycling recklessly and dangerously will lose their cycling permit. Could I ask parents to talk to students about the importance of cycling safely and responsibly. From January, students cycling to school will be required to wear a helmet. Please do not send students to school without helmets. Students who persistently do not wear a helmet will be asked to leave their bike at home. I would be very grateful for your support on this.

Access to the School site

Parents/Carers are reminded that only 1 adult is allowed per drop off, with no access to the site for the adult. No cars/vehicles are allowed on site and no parking is available on site.

Parents/Carers /visitors will only be permitted on site by pre-arranged appointments.

May I take this opportunity to wish you a peaceful festive holiday and best wishes for a normal 2021!



R Gilpin
Headteacher