

Dear parents/carers,

I hope that you managed to have a relaxing half term break. Last half term was difficult as we struggled with staff absence in a way we hadn't previously. We had a lot of supply teachers in the building and our staff went above and beyond to cover for their colleagues. The students managed all of the disruption very well; thank you to you as well for bearing with us whilst we navigated those difficulties. Towards the end of the half term the situation was much improved so we are hopeful that this will continue and that we will have a much more settled half term.

Whilst we are not fully back to normal, it is great to see lots of positive things happening in the academy: rehearsals for our summer production of Matilda are well under way, it is brilliant to see lots of students taking advantage of enrichment opportunities and we are very close to being able to announce details for the Year 11 prom. It is also very pleasing that during such disrupted times our attendance figures continue to be above national average. Over the next couple of weeks the focus is very much on Year 11 and Year 13 mock examinations, providing the students with the opportunity to experience what the summer examinations will be like. Due to the disruption that students have faced over the past 2 years there have been extra measures put in place by examination boards. In some subjects there are less topics to revise, support materials will be provided for other subjects and all subjects have had advance information about topics that will be on the examinations. All of these measures, plus assurances that grading will be more generous than usual examination years is very encouraging and should allow for very focused revision enabling students to do themselves justice in the summer. The next 2 half terms are absolutely crucial for our Year 11 and Year 13 students.

During the half term break, the government updated the Covid guidance for schools. I have summarised these below but the changes for schools are minor in reality:

From 21 February, staff and pupils in mainstream secondary schools will not be expected to continue taking part in F1 16-01 2 1(e)f1 0 for (ymp)-6)-34m(4)c( foDec3(thit8ak5)-12(a)3(e)7d)-6sh)4ou

