

Our Ref: SST/HBr

Monday 1st September 2025

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Re: Start of the academic year and key updates

I hope you and your family have had a lovely summer. I am very excited to welcome our pupils back to the school to commence the new academic year.

As a reminder, we will be welcoming pupils back to the school as follows:

- Monday 1st and Tuesday 2nd September are staff INSET days.
- On Wednesday 3rd September Years 1-6, Year 7 and Year 12 should come to school at the normal school times.
- On Thursday 4th September Years 1-6, Year 7 and Year 13 should come to school at the normal school times.
- On Friday 5th September all pupils are to return to school and Term 1 will be up and running in earnest.

I would like to take this opportunity to remind you of a few expectations placed on our pupils, as follows:

- All pupils should come to school dressed in full school uniform, as per our uniform policy. It is very much an expectation, for Secondary Phase Pupils, that shirts are tucked in and pupils can be issued with behaviour points for not wearing their uniform correctly.
- We are a mobile phone free school. Once pupils enter the school at the start of the day their phone should then be switched off and placed in their bag or blazer pocket out of sight. Any pupil seen using their phone will have it confiscated for a week, including the weekend. This is detailed in our behaviour policy.
- Pupils should only bring water to school. Pupils are not to bring fizzy drinks to school and if they are seen they will be confiscated.

I would also like to make you aware that at Key Stage 3 (Years 7/8/9 the total number of tutor groups and class sets has been reduced from 10 groups to 9 groups. This does mean that classes and tutor groups will be slightly larger. With this in mind all class sets in Key Stage 3 will be predominantly mixed ability but there will be two top sets in each of the year groups in question at Key Stage 3. This is reflective of the current financial climate facing all schools nationally where we have been expected to do more with less as a sector.

In terms of communication with the school all parents/guardians should direct their concerns in the first instance to either their child's class teacher within the Primary Phase or their child's tutor, in the Secondary Phase. Please be politely reminded that staff have 48 hours to respond to concerns (excluding weekends) and parents/guardians should not turn

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up to the school expecting no-notice meetings; often staff are teaching, in meetings or performing other functions in line with their roles.

If you reach a stage where the relevant staff members, as already laid out, are unable to address your concern then this can be elevated to the following staff:

- EYFS – Miss Catlin, EYFS Lead
- Key Stage 1 – Mrs Owen, Key Stage 1 Lead
- Lower Key Stage 2 – Miss Page, Lower Key Stage 1 Lead
- Upper Key Stage 2 – Mrs Kay, Upper Key Stage 1 Lead
- Year 7 – Mrs Quinn, Assistant Director of Year and Miss McColl, Director of Year
- Year 8 – Miss Monaghan, Assistant Director of Year and Mr Elliott, Director of Year
- Year 9 – Mr Honer, Assistant Director of Year and Mr Marshall, Director of Year
- Year 10 – Mrs Kimpton, Assistant Director of Year and Mr Brown, Director of Year
- Year 11 – Miss Ward, Assistant Director of Year and Mrs McDonald, Director of Year
- Year 12 and Year 13 – Mrs Martin and Miss Griffiths, Heads of Year 13 and Mr Floyer, Head of Year 12

Thereafter the following senior leaders look after each phase / Key Stage within the school:

Primary Phase – Mrs Pragnell, Deputy Head of Primary and Mrs Loomes, Head of Primary

Key Stage 3:

Year 7: Miss Giles, Assistant Principal

Year 8: Miss Perry, Assistant Principal

Year 9: Mr Nelson, Assistant Principal

Mrs Jones, Vice Principal is in Charge of Key Stage 3 as a whole.

Key Stage 4:

Year 10: Mr Beal, Senior Assistant Principal

Year 11: Mr Wade, Senior Assistant Principal

Mr Wise, Senior Vice Principal is in Charge of Key Stage 4 as a whole.

Key Stage 5 – Mrs Montagu, Vice Principal / Director of Sixth Form

Please also note that the Designated Safeguarding Lead for the school is Mr Dewes, Vice Principal. Mr Dewes ultimately oversees safeguarding for the entire all-through school.

I would also like to make you aware that within the Secondary Phase of the school formal lessons come to a close at 12.15pm on the days that we have Year 7-11 inclusive parent consultation events. This is due to the size and scale of the year groups. On these days' pupils are expected to go home, eat their lunch and then engage with work that is set on Teams/Class Charts for the fourth and fifth lesson of that day. Please be aware of the following dates when this approach will be taking place:

19/11 – Year 11 Parent Consultation Event

5/2 – Year 9 Parent Consultation Event

11/3 – Year 10 Parent Consultation Event

2/7 – Year 7 Parent Consultation Event

9/7 – Year 8 Parent Consultation Event

I am also delighted to share with you our outcomes from all of the external accountability measures that we face as a school community for the 2024 – 2025 academic year, as follows:

- Within the Primary Phase the EYFS GLD outcomes were 80%, which is our second strongest set of outcomes in the school's history.
- The Year 1 Phonics outcomes were the highest in the school's history at 88%.
- The Year 4 multiplication checks outcomes were 38%, which are likely to be above national average.
- Our outgoing Year 6 pupils achieved a best ever set of SAT outcomes, with Reading at 82%, Writing at 77%, Maths at 82%, SPAG at 85%, Science at 77% and a combined Reading, Writing and Maths score of 72%.
- Our Year 11 GCSE outcomes were the second highest in the school's history. 71% of pupils achieved an English and Maths combined 4-9 outcome, with 48% achieving a 5-9. The school also achieved the highest ever overall attainment 8 score in its history.
- The school's A Level outcome were the highest in the school's history, with 81% of pupils achieving an A*-C, 61% of pupils achieving an A*-B and 31% of pupils achieving an A/A*.
- The Post 16 vocational outcomes were the second highest in the school's history, with an average grade of a Distinction+.
- Over 77% of our pupils are going to university this year, with pupils set to read Medicine, Natural Sciences and other highly competitive courses. A significant number of our pupils are also set to attend top third universities including the Russell Group and the University of Cambridge. The overwhelming majority of our pupils secured their first-choice university preference. A number of pupils are also set to embark on highly competitive degree apprenticeships, with a number of pupils set to undertake a gap year and travel.

I could not be prouder of the achievements stemming from 2024 to 2025. The pupils have achieved incredible feats and I have been overwhelmed by their hard work, diligence and resilience.

As a school we also promote high levels of attendance and it is very much an expectation that any given pupil is in school for 97% of the time. All of our internal data shows that where pupil attendance is 90% or less they underperform in their GCSEs by at least one full grade in every subject. Conversely, where pupils have 95% plus attendance these pupils achieve over one full grade higher than they are expected to on average across all of their subjects. If a pupil is absent from school please be aware that all of our remote learning plans are uploaded on a termly basis onto Teams. Ultimately, we do not want any of our pupils to fall behind with their learning.

I would also like to remind you that we are trialling a two-week October half term break this year, which is set to take place during the week's commencing 20/10 and 27/10. This is a trial approach and one that I will be reviewing in Term 2, both in terms of pupil, parental and staff feedback and through looking at pupil and staff attendance in Term 2. With this in mind the precise holiday dates for the 2026 – 2027 academic year are only in draft and will

be set in stone in January 2026 once the two-week October break is fully reviewed for its impact.

This will invariably be another busy term and I thank you in advance for your support for the school.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. Strickland', written in a cursive style.

Mr Strickland
Principal/CEO