

EBR/SJS

15 July 2021

Dear Parents/Guardians,

As we approach the end of an exciting and challenging year, I hope this letter finds you and your families well and looking forward to much needed respite over the summer break. Since I last wrote to you, we have seen increased cases of COVID on the base and in the ROC and reduced attendance at school. I must thank the school's Sodexo and support staff for their fantastic hard work in regularly reviewing our risk assessment, sticking to a relentless and strict cleaning regime and for stepping up to test our students on a weekly basis – all of which have contributed to much lower numbers of cases in school (a total of 5 students, 1 teacher and 7 support staff since September 2019) compared to the bases and the ROC.

End of Term Arrangements

Despite not being able to run activities week this year, we are pleased to offer a range of opportunities for students to end the term on a high note! Our programme includes rewards assemblies, tutor quizzes, swimming galas and pool parties: **please ensure your child has their swimming kit for Monday if they are in Years 7, 8 and 9 and for Tuesday if they are in Year 8 and Year 12. School finishes for the year at 12:30 on Tuesday 20th July.**

Although we were not able to hold transition days in school again this year, we did host a very successful virtual presentation. Please visit our Facebook page to see the wonderful videos produced by our current Year 7 students giving you a tour and taste of life at St John's School through their eyes. We are really looking forward to meeting our new students and families in September and the school will be open for families to visit and purchase uniform as follows:

- Monday 30th August 09:00 – 12:00
- Tuesday 31st August 09:00 – 12:00
- Wednesday 1st September 08:00 – 14:00

School Uniform in Key Stages 3 and 4

The new academic year presents an opportunity to reset expectations around school uniform, following a year of disruption and allowances made due to Covid-19. Students are reminded of the need to be in correct uniform from the beginning of the new term. Students will no longer be permitted to wear their PE kit to school and will need to change into their PE kit during the periods that they have timetabled PE lessons. Standards of uniform are usually exemplary however, I do want to take this opportunity to remind students that footwear must be black in colour without any logos or any other coloured detail. Leather shoes are preferred however, canvas pumps are also permitted. No other shoes, trainers or boots are allowed. We will also expect girls' skirts to be rolled down and jewellery/nails to comply with the school policy.

Further information regarding uniform can be found on our website with details as to how you may purchase items.

New Beginnings

This summer we say a very sad goodbye to two members of our English faculty: Dr David Kelly who retires after 31 years of service to MOD Schools and Miss Dawn Vance who is moving back to the UK after 6 years at St John's School. Both have brought a wealth of experience, creativity and fun to both English lessons and the school and will be sorely missed. Mrs Glencross and Mrs Parry-Paxton will join the English team next year, led by myself. This means we can continue with specialist teaching to all year groups until we are able to recruit a new Head of Faculty in the autumn term.

We also say goodbye to Robin Millard, Louise Jones, Lindsay Daniel and Ruby Beecham from our LSA staff who have made an outstanding contribution to our SEND provision, nurture hub, food department and Snack Shack! Recruitment is currently taking place for these posts and we will update you in September regarding the successful appointments. I am sure you will join me in thanking all staff leaving this year for their incredible commitment to our students and in wishing them all the best for their onward journeys.

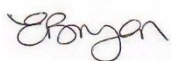
New Academic Year

Details for the start of the new academic year are as follows:

- Wednesday 1st September – INSET Day for staff. **No students in school**
- Thursday 2nd September – Induction day for **Year 7 and 11 students only 08:00 – 12:30**
- Friday 3rd September – Year 7-11 and 13 students return for a full day
- Thursday 2nd and Friday 3rd September – Year 12 interviews for the Sixth Form
- Monday 6th September – lessons begin for Year 12

I leave you with a final quote for the school year, as you may be reflecting on a year mired in challenging logistical issues and uncertainty. Just occasionally, though, it's worth reminding ourselves that whatever our role in a school, we are engaged in something with a bigger moral purpose. As the late great Rabbi Jonathan Sacks put it: "To defend a country you need an army, but to defend a civilisation you need education."

Yours faithfully,



Emma Bryson
Headteacher