



Year 8 End of Term Update

Dear Parents

As we approach the Christmas holiday, we thought it would be appropriate to get in touch after what has been a busy Autumn Term.

Attendance

We are aware as a school of the strong correlation between high attendance and high attainment. The number of pupils receiving a grade 8 or 9 at GCSE last academic year stood at 50%. However, for those pupils who had below 80% attendance the percentage 8 or 9 grades dropped to 0%. The impact of attendance on attainment was also reflected at A Level where the number of pupils receiving a grade A*/A at A Level last academic year stood at 53%, for those pupils who had below 80% attendance percentage A*/A grades dropped to 0%.

There is a national growing concern about the number of pupils who are 'persistently absent' (attending less than 90%) and those pupils with 'severe persistent absence' (attending less than 50%). You may receive a letter in future highlighting that your son is 'persistently absent'. These letters are purely for information as we are aware that there may be circumstances to explain the level of absence. However, as we continue to move through the academic year, we would appreciate your support in ensuring that all our pupils are in school as much as possible.

Uniform

We would like to take this opportunity to remind parents and students of our expectations for high standards of uniform. As we continue through the winter months, we appreciate your support in reminding your son of the need to wear a plain black or grey V-neck jumper under his blazer if he wishes; hoodies and crested / branded jumpers are not permitted. Your son may also wear a coat on top of his blazer when travelling to and from school, but we ask that these are removed when inside the School buildings.

Tutor Time Programme

Our tutor time programme is continuing to afford your son plenty of time to enjoy reading. This term, our Year 8 form groups have been reading books such as Holes, Skulduggery Pleasant Playing with Fire and Pig Heart Boy. Other notable tutor time activities have included School Council meetings, wellbeing surveys and form presentations.

Year group assemblies have continued the theme of their Open Parachute sessions by focusing on High Expectations, Taking Responsibility, The Power of Kind Words, Tommy's Award and Anti-Bullying Week.

Extra-Curricular

The Year 8 rugby squad have enjoyed notable victories against Christ College Brecon, Dean Close and Pates.

For Cross Country, our runners qualified for the regional finals at Bromsgrove and Charlie Parsons finished twelfth. The other team members were Ben Jenkins, Joe Lee, Alessandro Biselli, Corin Floyd and Harry Overthrow.

It has been a busy term for the music department with Year 8 supporting in performances throughout the term; this included Jazz Band's stunning performance at the open evening in October; the Christmas Concert last week where Year 8 students were actively involved across all groups such as Orchestra, String Group, Brass Band, Wind Band and Choir. Congratulations go to Ed Jury who has just achieved a distinction on grade 5 Drums.

Whilst this extra-curricular summary still does not include every achievement this term, we are delighted at our students' success and we commend their hard work and positivity.

Personal Belongings

We would like to remind your son to make sure that he takes home all personal belongings at the end of term. During the holiday, site maintenance jobs and our thorough cleaning of the School are always much easier to facilitate when belongings are safely with their owner. This will also prevent any belongings left in school from being displaced or disposed of during the Christmas break.

Upcoming Dates / Events

A brief reminder that next term will have the following events for Year 8:

- Year 8 Parents' Evening – Tuesday 5 March
- Order 3 Progress Reports – Friday 22 March

During the next term, we will also be hosting Year 11 and Year 13 mock examinations. These are important examinations for students in these year groups, so we ask that all students are mindful of this and follow instructions

to remain quiet around the examination halls.

Finally, it just leaves us to say that on behalf of all the Form Tutors and the Key Stage Team, we hope that your son has a safe and enjoyable break this Christmas.

Best wishes

Chloe Rigby-Smith, Head of Year 8

Peter Daniell, Head of Key Stage 3.

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