

20 December 2024

Dear parents and carers,

As we reach the end of this busy autumn term, I hope you are all looking forward to spending the holiday period with your families and friends. As a school we recognise and value the importance of working in partnership with our parents and carers and the wider family to get the best out of our students and I want to take this opportunity to thank you all for your continued support and understanding through the challenges we have faced this term.

### PosiTIV

Please find a link [here to our half termly magazine PosiTIV](#). The content summarises so much that is good about the school, from the new Vision and Values to welcoming the new Year 7 cohort who and quickly adapted, participating in various activities and forming new friendships. Young carers and their friends enjoyed a special screening of "Paddington in Peru," showcasing the value of being respectful. Our Year 11 Ambassadors organized a week of activities for Anti-bullying Week and Children in Need, raising over £2300 through events like a bench ball tournament, staff sumo wrestling, and a 12-hour cycling event. Year 10 students participated in a masterclass on asteroids, learning about space science and conducting experiments. After reading "The Giver," Year 8 students created their own dystopian societies, exploring themes of control and individuality. Year 7 students Jameela and Ellie raised funds for period poverty, demonstrating leadership and compassion. For Remembrance Day there was a School-wide two-minute silence observed. Students in the services, scouts, or guides wore uniforms and participated in a parade led by Year 11 student Luka and the Head Boy and Head Girl laid a wreath in the Peace Garden. There were Sports Festivals organized by Sports Leaders, including tennis, handball, and girls' football and the Interact Group, sent 48 shoeboxes to Ukraine and raised £1500 at the Christmas Craft Fair. We also celebrated the start of the Christmas holidays at St Pauls church with readings and hymns.

### Leadership changes

I am pleased to announce that we have now appointed a new SENDCo, Mr Humberstone who starts at THS on 6 January and who is very much looking forward to supporting our students inside and outside the classroom. Mr Humberstone was in school at the start of this week getting to know his team and meeting some of your children. As you will know Blackdown Education Partnership (BEP) are supporting the leadership of the school as we move into the new year. Following the OFSTED report we know there are significant improvements needed, and I will continue to work with staff, students and the community to bring about long-term sustainable change.

### Changes from January 2024

#### School Gates

Students are expected to be onsite and in school by 8:30. The sports hall gates and the Morrisons gates will be locked at 8:30am. Therefore, students arriving after this time will need to be dropped off outside the gates and will be admitted via the pedestrian gate at the front of school. There will be a team of colleagues there to assist with marking students late as well as resolve any uniform issues.

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### **Complaints Procedure**

In my short time here, it has become apparent that the complaints policy is not being followed. To ensure transparency and so that you can feel reassured the school follows process, please from January 2025 if you wish to make a formal complaint, use the form on the website – it can be found by clicking this [link](#). If you do not wish to make a formal complaint but wish for clarity or disagree with something at school, please contact your child's tutor or head of year in the first instance.

### **Uniform and equipment**

Our uniform expectations remain unchanged, however unfortunately some students have started to wear items of clothing and jewellery which are not included in our uniform. Some students may need new uniform for the New Year so can we please take this opportunity to remind you of our uniform expectations. The full uniform policy can be found [here](#).

We endeavour to have positive interactions with our students around the school and where uniform is incorrect it often leads to a negative interaction between staff and students, as well as the possibility of lost learning time. In the main building students will be expected to take their coats off and wear their blazers. They are compulsory and should be worn at all times unless given permission not to.

### **Equipment**

Over the course of the last term, your child may have lost or damaged some of the equipment they will need for the spring term. I would therefore ask that you check these through with your child to ensure they have the following ready for the first day back. The equipment will be checked twice a week in tutor time.

|                              |                              |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>School bag</b>            | <b>Reusable water bottle</b> |
| <b>Highlighter</b>           | <b>Purple pen</b>            |
| <b>Clear pencil case</b>     | <b>Glue stick</b>            |
| <b>Scientific calculator</b> | <b>Pencil</b>                |
| <b>Black pen</b>             | <b>Ruler</b>                 |
| <b>Eraser</b>                |                              |

### **Give where you live**

A huge thank you for supporting our staff and students to Give Where You Live; we have raised just over £500 and 2 big trolley loads of food to be donated to CHAT to support local families within our community. A huge thank you to everyone who donated, these have been gratefully received by CHAT who reported they are struggling to meet demand in the current climate with additional requests, a decrease in donations and rising food prices.

Finally, my team and I would like to wish you a merry Christmas and hope you have a safe and happy break, and we look forward to welcoming all our students back on the 7 January 2025 at 8:30am.

Yours sincerely



Mr J Lamb  
Headteacher