

14th September 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

We've had a successful first week back at school and our new students are settling in really well. I've been impressed by the atmosphere in lessons and how well everybody has conducted themselves around school. I am writing regarding several things you need to be aware of.

1. **EARLY CLOSURES AND INSET DAYS**

We will be closing early next week for our **Year 6 Open Evening on Wednesday 22nd September** from 4-7pm. Some of our current students will be present to help out on the evening and in order to prepare for the evening, we will be **closing at 1.15pm** on that day. A lunch service will still be available if required. However, school buses will remain at their normal time on all of these dates. If you wish your child to remain in school until 3.10pm please inform their form tutor so that we can make alternative arrangements.

There are several other **dates for your diary** when school will be closed to students: Given the impact of the pandemic, we have an increased focus on students acquiring and retaining the knowledge they require to flourish in the future. To assist with our ongoing planning, **we will be closing to students at 1.15pm on five occasions** for staff training and ongoing development of the school curriculum. These early closures will be on the following dates:

- **Monday 18th October** (1.15pm finish)
- **Tuesday 7th December** (1.15pm finish)
- **Thursday 27^h January** (1.15pm finish)
- **Wednesday 9th March** (1.15pm finish)
- **Monday 4th July** (1.15pm finish)

We also have **4 remaining INSET Days** spread throughout the year when the school will be closed to students. These are:

- **Friday 24th September**
- **Tuesday 4th January**
- **Friday 18th February**
- **Friday 24th June**

Please note that due to the additional Platinum Jubilee bank holiday falling in the middle of May half term, Warwickshire County Council have amended the school year by one day. We will therefore be **breaking up on Thursday 21st July**, not Friday 22nd July 2020.

2. **COVID VACCINATIONS FOR 12-15 YEAR OLDS**

You will no doubt be aware of the government's decision yesterday to offer Covid vaccinations to 12 to 15-year-olds as a vital step forward in reducing educational disruption. This is particularly important in light of recently published evidence from the SAGE modelling group which warned that it is highly likely that exponential increases in infections will be seen in school-attending age groups in the autumn term. It is crucial that everything possible is done to prevent this from happening so that students are healthy and able to attend school.

I am conscious of the debate that has been raging over vaccinations, but it is important to see this issue in the context of educational disruption. While the evidence is that students are less likely than older age groups to suffer severe symptoms as a result of catching Covid, the damage caused by disrupted schooling is very real and very apparent, both in terms of learning loss and in the impact on mental health and wellbeing. Student vaccinations are intended to help minimise this disruption.

Whilst we are awaiting further details of the process, it is clear that our role as a school will be limited to hosting vaccination sessions and related administrative tasks. The vaccinations will be administered by healthcare staff, something that already happens annually with other vaccines. The question of whether or not to offer Covid vaccinations to this age group has clearly been thoroughly considered and the decision on whether or not to accept this offer is a matter for families. Any disagreements over the question of consent between students and parents, which is likely to be extremely rare in practice, will be resolved by healthcare staff. I will let you know more in due course.

In the meantime, students should continue to **self-LFD test** at home **every Wednesday and Sunday**.

3. UNIFORM REMINDER

Please can you ensure that students come to school in the correct uniform and be mindful that:

- Students should **bring a face covering** every day (and a spare).
- Students are **not permitted to wear sweatshirts or hoodies** to school. From tomorrow **these will be confiscated**.
- Students are **expected to have the school quarter zip top as part of their PE kit**. If they do not, then they will need to wear their blazer over the top of their PE t-shirt.
- **The school quarter zip top may also double up as a school jumper** when wearing regular uniform if an additional layer is required underneath the blazer.

If you are in any doubt about uniform requirements, full details are on the website under the 'school information' tab. By wearing full school uniform day after day students show that they buy into the ethos of the school and this removes unnecessary arguments and barriers to learning.

4. HOME-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

- You will by now be receiving **daily emails when your child has had a 'good' or 'excellent' lesson**. Students who receive a grade 4 or 5 during a lesson will automatically be kept behind for up to 10 minutes by their form tutor. This should maximise the impact of our new register grades by providing a same-day response.
- We are also sending **a summative email to parents on Sundays listing the homework that has been set and handed in during the previous week** to help you monitor your child's performance.
- **Please check and sign the student planner weekly** as well as logging onto **My Child at School** which contains a range of key information.
- I would ask you to build a relationship with your child's tutor as the first point of contact, though individual teaching staff may be contacted directly by their initialsurname@stratfordschool.co.uk e.g. nwallace@stratfordschool.co.uk.

In the meantime, we look forward to working closely together to ensure that your child has a safe, happy and successful academic year. Please follow us on twitter [@StraUponAvonSch](https://twitter.com/StraUponAvonSch) or check the school website www.stratforduponavonschool.com for regular updates.

Yours sincerely



Mr Neil Wallace, Headteacher