



SIR THOMAS FREMANTLE SCHOOL

A CO-EDUCATIONAL SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS AGED 11-19

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11th December 2020

Dear parents and carers,

Re: End of Term Update

As we fast approach Christmas and the New Year, I am sure we are all in agreement that 2021 can only be better. Young people across the country have been significantly affected by the pandemic and I could not be more proud of how the students at STFS have managed this unique situation. They have demonstrated tremendous resolve and not wavered in their studies. Their day is characterised by hard work and a determination beyond their years. Whilst schools are open, things are certainly not normal and are unlikely to be normal until at least the spring. Throughout the term, I have been amazed at just how quickly our students have adapted to what has become the new normal. They are made of stern stuff here, and this resilience will continue to see us all through this challenging time. Thank you for your continued trust and support in sending your children in each day. We completely understand, and are not immune ourselves, to the anxieties that the pandemic brings. The reaction from the whole school community has been extraordinary and as a result, we have managed to maintain a pleasing level of attendance throughout.

By the time this letter is sent out, Year 11s would have completed their mocks and Year 13 will have had their mock results. Again, this was something we have had to adapt and we are delighted with the Year 11's and Year 13's commitment to their mocks. The results of these mocks give the students real clarity over their next steps and an opportunity to refine revision programmes. Well done to all!

The Department for Education have finally released their Summer exam guidance and made some allowances for exams. The link below gives a detailed overview of these modifications.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-support-the-summer-2021-exams/guidance-to-support-the-summer-2021-exams>

We will be in touch in the New Year to summarise the changes. Students should continue with their individual revision plans throughout their remaining time in school and each subject will explain any changes and the impact these changes will have in January.



Sadly, we will be saying goodbye to some staff at Christmas. Mr Wicks is moving on to a role outside of teaching. Julie Smith, our school nurse, is returning to the NHS, as will Shantor Sadi from our catering team. We are sorry to see you leave and we thank you for everything you have contributed to the school and life at STFS. Everyone will miss you.

We are changing how we monitor homework. This will no longer be logged as a -2 on Classcharts as we want to differentiate between poor incidents of behaviour and behaviour for learning. This will now be logged as an incomplete homework so parents can still keep track. The consequences of this will involve conversations with the teacher, student and subject lead; and if there are incidents of repeat avoidance of homework, after school detentions will be utilised. As a school we believe that it can play an important role in helping students to consolidate understanding and bridge gaps in knowledge. If any parents are unable to view their child's Classcharts data, please email reception who can resend out the activation code.

As you will be aware, Miss Owens and Mrs Gerrard, our School Catering Manager, have launched our Christmas Dinner initiative. We know how hard things have been for many families over the last few months and the devastating impact that COVID has had on people's livelihoods and finances. As we are not having a whole school Christmas dinner this year, we felt that we could support some families in the local community and provide a Christmas dinner. The response from the community has been phenomenal and the kind offers of donations and support have been remarkable. Thank you to everyone who has offered support through contributions, and for preparing and delivering the food. We are truly grateful for your kindness. In particular, special thanks to The Buckingham Butcher, Caterfayre and Garry Penn whose generous support has allowed us to create these meals. Thank you.

As with every half term letter, can families please restock pencil cases over the break. Some pencil cases are starting to look a little empty and for obvious reasons we do not want to be lending out equipment, nor do we want students sharing equipment. I know this is something we mention regularly, but having the correct equipment ready for each day does allow for a smoother and more purposeful start to lessons. In addition to school equipment, please can individual stocks of hand sanitiser be replenished. Whilst the school have ample supplies of sanitiser, students being able to sanitise throughout the day has certainly helped us in our efforts to keep COVID out of school. Can I also remind families not to allow piercings and non-natural hair colours over the Christmas break. I appreciate that the packaging states the dye will wash out quickly; experience says it doesn't.

Emma Smith will be in touch regarding how we will still need to work together for the first part of the Christmas break if there are any positive COVID tests. It is so important that we follow the guidance so that everyone can have a Christmas break. Please look out for an email regarding this on Monday.



As Slade once said, “look to the future now, it has only just begun”. If there was ever a year to look forward to the New Year, it is now. The challenges that 2020 has brought will make us stronger, but have hopefully allowed us to reflect on what is important. If these last few months have taught us anything, it is that we all recognise that being kind, having our loved ones close and holding on to our memories is what will see us through the tough times.

All that is left for me to say is we wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We will see you all on Monday 4th January at 8.35am.

Yours faithfully,

Neale Pledger
Headteacher

