

10<sup>th</sup> February 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

We are coming to the end of yet another half term in lockdown, and we are all aware how tough this has been for students, parents and staff. Managing distance learning and teaching is something we are all coming to terms with but I don't underestimate how difficult this can be, especially for students in Year 11 coming up to GCSEs in the summer.

We all need to be kind to ourselves; while school work is important, and our expectations of students are high, we must all be realistic as well about managing workload for everyone and keeping everything in perspective. Mental health and wellbeing is our priority and we must balance this against keeping teaching and learning going.

Thank you to students who have registered online every morning and turned in assignments on time as much as possible; to staff who remain cheerful and optimistic, and solve IT issues with patience and good humour; and to parents who are supporting their children to do the best they can in challenging circumstances.

The earliest date we have been told that students will return to school is 8th March, so after half term we will have at least a further two weeks of distance learning to complete. Whether that date will see a full or a partial return to school is yet to be decided by the Secretary of State, and senior staff are currently planning for every eventuality. As soon as we know more details, we will let you know what to do.

In the meantime, please encourage your child to contact their teachers with questions or concerns around their work and we will be pleased to do our best to help. Most importantly, everyone needs a proper break at half term, so next week, step away from your laptops (staff and students!) and do something different to look after yourselves, safely, at a social distance and within Covid 19 regulations.

Thank you for your patience and understanding through these difficult times. Like everyone, I am looking forward to a return to 'normality', or something like it, as soon as possible - so please play your part everyone and do the right thing, stay home, stay safe for a little while longer.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J. Schafer".

Judith Schafer  
Executive Headteacher

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