

December 2020

Dear Parents

As we approach the end of term, I hope that you and your families continue to stay safe and well. This will be my final letter of 2020 – a year that has been without doubt the most challenging that we could have imagined.

The way that our BPS community has pulled together has been quite incredible and I have been very grateful for the support that so many of you have shown to staff during this time. Our students have also responded positively to the changes we have made and have been a credit to themselves, their families and the school.

End of Term arrangements

Although we may not be able to celebrate the festive season in quite the same way that we would like, there will be a lot of special activities taking place in school over the coming days. I am delighted that a number of students have been nominated by staff and will receive special Christmas treats for living out our school values of Positivity, Ambition, Resilience and Thoughtfulness.

Students are demonstrating their Thoughtfulness through taking part in our Christmas Kindness Challenge. We have developed close links with The Park House Care home and Year 7 and 8 students have taken time to write a Christmas card to send to residents in the home. Year 9 and 10 students have produced a Christmas video to share with the home and staff have donated items to send a Christmas hamper for residents to enjoy.

We would like staff and students to enter into the Christmas spirit on our last day of term and wear “own clothes” and a Christmas jumper or something festive on this day. Following the recent DfE announcement, please note that school will now close for students at **3pm on Thursday 17th December**.

COVID / Health and Safety

Ahead of the start of the new school term, please can I remind you of the following measures that will help us all to stay safe and well:

Students should **NOT** attend school if they are displaying any symptoms of coronavirus. These are:

- a high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not necessarily need to measure your temperature)
- a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal.



If your child has any of these symptoms, they should self-isolate at home and you should seek a test. If you are unsure whether your child has COVID symptoms or is otherwise unwell, please contact us before sending them in to school so that we can discuss this with you. Please keep us informed as soon as possible of the outcome of any COVID tests.

Please can I ask you to remind your son/daughter to bring a face covering to school each day. We cannot continue to provide these free of charge and any students who persistently forget to bring a face covering to school will be asked to pay a nominal charge of 20p for a disposable daily mask.

Start of Term / Mid-Year Assessments

The new spring term starts on **Monday 4th January 2021** and we look forward to welcoming all students back on this day at the usual staggered start times.

You will have already received information on our mid-year assessment weeks for Years 7-10, which will take place from Monday 4th – Friday 15th January. Alongside the festivities, please encourage your child to find time for revision over the Christmas break so that they feel well prepared ahead of these assessments.

As we reach the end of a very long term, I would like to take the opportunity to thank you once again for your patience and support in recent months. I know how challenging this time has been for everyone but I also know that our BPS values have shone through our school community and I am confident that we will emerge stronger than ever as we go into next year.

My final thanks must go to my colleagues here at BPS. I cannot tell you how proud I am to work with such a dedicated team of staff. They have worked tirelessly this term to ensure that we provide the very best education possible for your children, often under the most challenging circumstances. I would like to wish you all a peaceful Christmas and a very Happy New Year.

Yours Faithfully

Helen Johnson