



## Year 8 End of Term Update

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Dear Parents

In School, it is very much starting to feel like the Christmas holiday is upon us. We have decorated the School Christmas Tree, which has pride of place in the main hall, many staff have decorated their classrooms, and our pupils are getting increasingly excited!

We are still eagerly anticipating a few Christmas events: our School Christmas Meal, final Whole School Christmas Assembly and the Carol Service, which will take place on 19 December at Holy Trinity Church, Longlevens, starting at 18.00. We also thought it an appropriate time for a few updates and reminders.

### **Attendance**

As we mention regularly to pupils and at Parent Information Evenings earlier in the academic year, we are aware that there is a strong correlation between high attendance and high attainment.

This has also been reflected in the Department for Education tightening its statutory guidance in relation to attendance in August of this year. Our school data continues to reflect this at both GCSE and A Level. The percentage of those students getting 8 and 9 grades at GCSE, or A/A\* grades at A Level is significantly higher for those pupils whose attendance is above 90% (below 90% attendance is defined as 'persistently absent').

You may receive a letter in the future highlighting that your son is 'persistently absent'. These letters are purely for information as we are aware that there may be circumstances to explain the level of absence. However, as we continue to move through the academic year, we would appreciate your support in ensuring that all our pupils are in school as much as possible.

### **Uniform**

We would like to take this opportunity to remind parents and pupils of our expectations for high standards of uniform. As we move through the winter months, particularly January and February, we appreciate your support in reminding your son of the need to wear a plain black or grey V-neck jumper under his blazer if he wishes; hoodies and crested / branded jumpers are not permitted. Your son may also wear a coat on top of his blazer when travelling to and from school.

### **Tutor Time Programme**

The second half of the Autumn term has been busy in tutor time with our usual round of Whole School, Head of Year and House assemblies. We look forward to our final Whole School Assembly which will be an opportunity for the School to come together to celebrate the successes of the year so far.

As part of our regular programme, pupils in Year 7-10 have been reading and discussing a wide variety of texts including *Holes* by Louis Sachar and Year 7-9 have been performing their form presentations on subjects such as how to design your own computer, both of which contribute towards The Tommy's Award. Further highlights from the programme include:

- School Council
- Anti-Bullying Week and Anti-bullying Ambassadors
- White Ribbon Day Fundraising
- Money Mules
- Healthy Eating
- Remembrance and Armistice Day

### **Extra-Curricular**

This term saw members of Year 8 proudly participating in the arts; it has been great to see a good number of Year 8 students taking part in the rehearsals for the upcoming performances of the musical 'We Will Rock You'.

It has been another packed term for STRS musicians. Ying-Tai Yilmaz wowed students, parents and honoured guests at our annual Prize Giving with an excellent rendition of Chopin's Mazurka in A minor Op17 No4. Special mention should also be made of Brass Group leading the school in our Remembrance Service as well as Joshua Thomson who was selected to help write this year's G15 song, celebrating the performing arts work in the 15 Gloucester secondary schools.

The Jazz Band performed superbly well in their recent Jazz Evening hosted at the school. We wish members of the orchestra, wind band, chamber choir and string group all the best for their final upcoming Christmas performances including the Carol Service and the performance of some seasonal favourites in our final whole school assemblies of 2024.

An honourable mention must go to Jonah Maharjan for his Creative Writing entry for its originality and craftsmanship.

Outside of school congratulations go to Toby Haworth who won the Gloucestershire Schools U13 table tennis competition and will be competing in the regional finals in the new year.

Year 8 have had successful sporting season to date. The A team have had notable wins against The King's School Worcester, Haberdashers' Monmouth, and Cheltenham College Preparatory School.

The B team have won 10 of their 14 matches, drawing one. They have had notable wins against Bromsgrove, Dean Close and Cheltenham College Preparatory School. They have been a formidable force this term.

The C team have had a tough half term losing four of their six matches. Despite this, 25 boys have played for the C team this year, which is fantastic.

Unfortunately, towards the end of term the Year 8 rugby squad has been plagued with illness and injury. It would be great to see more boys give up their time to train and play regularly after Christmas.

Whilst this extra-curricular summary still does not include every achievement this term, we are delighted at our students' success, and we commend their hard work and positivity.

### **Personal Belongings**

We would like to remind your son to make sure that he takes home all personal belongings at the end of term. During the holiday, site maintenance jobs and our thorough cleaning of the School are always much easier to facilitate when belongings are safely with their owner. This will also prevent any belongings left in school being displaced or disposed of during the Christmas break.

### **Upcoming Dates / Events**

A brief reminder of key dates for next term:

- Year 8 Parents Evening – Tuesday 14 January
- INSET Day – Friday 31 January
- Year 8 HPV Vaccination – Wednesday 5 February
- Non-Uniform Day – Friday 7 February
- Whole School Production – Tuesday 11 – Thursday 13 February
- Half Term – Friday 14 – Sunday 23 February
- Founders Fortnight – Monday 10 – 21 March
- PTFA Quiz and Pudding Night – Friday 21 March
- Spring Concert – Thursday 14 March
- Non-Uniform Day – Friday 4 April
- End of Term – Friday 11 April

Finally, it just leaves us to say that on behalf of all the Form Tutors and the Key Stage Team, we hope that you and your family have a safe and enjoyable Christmas holiday.

Best wishes

Mrs Chloe Rigby-Smith (Head of Year 8)

Mr Peter Daniell (Assistant Headteacher – Head of Key Stages 3 and 4)

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