

January 7th 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Happy New Year! I hope you and yours have all enjoyed a positive start to 2020.

It has been lovely to see our students back in school today after the Christmas break. We have a busy term ahead and key dates are included at the end of this letter.

In the last week of term, we enjoyed celebrating achievements and successes across the school community. I was particularly pleased to recognise those students who are consistently wonderful in school with a special **"Always Award" Dinner**. Heads of Year Assemblies were full of awards and recognition for the special achievements of so many individual students. Special thanks go to Mrs Wilcox and Mrs Dawson Smith who organised a fantastic **Drop Down Day** that gave students some great opportunities to go on a range of trips and visits or be involved in exciting activities in school.

The first term of the year is always the longest and I hope the holidays have given everyone a chance to recharge batteries ready for some fantastic work this term.

Road Safety

Before the Christmas Break, I was contacted by our local police colleagues regarding parents and carers **stopping on the Bristol Road** to drop students off to school in the mornings. This causes a significant safety concern. We are expecting a presence from **enforcement officers** over the coming weeks who will issue spot fines to any vehicles stopping on the Bristol Road itself and any vehicles causing blocks by stopping or parking on Belton Grove where there are double yellow lines.

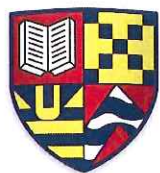
To help keep everyone safe while our build project is underway, the **biggest risks and dangers** we need you to avoid are the following:

- i) **Stopping to drop off on the Bristol Road X** – this is extremely dangerous as well as illegal. Stopping on the main road creates a health and safety risk for all other road users and must be avoided
- ii) **Using Belton Grove / School East Building staff car park for drop off X** – this is at times a very dangerous hotspot and should be avoided. Cars turning into Belton Grove are sometimes causing a backlog on the Bristol Road, with subsequent risk to road traffic and pedestrians. Cars turning into the school car park are causing a significant risk to student pedestrians.

Please use either Morrisons or McDonalds for drop-off, avoiding Belton Grove.

Uniform and Jewellery

We have done a great deal of work to maintain extremely high standards of uniform and jewellery. Your continued support to make sure your child is in correct uniform is appreciated. Please note we do not accept black trainers or branded shoes. Students are only allowed one small stud or sleeper in each ear. Hoodies are not allowed on in school and it is especially important your child wears a school coat during the cold Winter months.



Mobile Phone Policy : We Need your Help!

I have been delighted by the improvements we have seen in the behaviour of students during lessons and in social time since September, when we re-launched our new Behaviour for Learning policy. This is helping our student to achieve higher standards of learning in lessons and to enjoy quality social time at break and dinner times. We reviewed the changes with staff and students over the course of the term and your child will bring home an updated copy of the **Parent/Carer Guide** for you this week so that you can help us in our approach to **Behaviour for Learning**.

As you are no doubt aware, mis-use of **social media** can cause major issues for young people. Last term we dealt with a number of incidents in school that were caused by inappropriate messages on social media. In years 7 and 8, students do not have their phones with them during the school day and this is working well. In the last two weeks of term, we trialled a system of immediate phone confiscation when students in years 9 – 11 were using their mobile phones in school and we noticed big improvements.

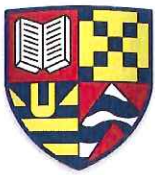
From the start of this term, we are therefore making it clear to all students that mobile phones **must be switched off and out of sight at all times** in school, unless their teacher allows use of phones as a learning device during a lesson. Phones will be immediately **confiscated** and a **School Detention** issued if a student uses a mobile phone during the day without permission of the teacher in a lesson.

We know that there are times you may need to get an urgent message to your child during the school day. Please be aware that they will not be able to pick up calls or messages without breaking school rules. If you urgently need to contact your child during the day, please contact **School Reception on 0121 453 1778** and we will ensure a message reaches them. If your child urgently needs to contact you during the day, they may go to Pupil Services during break or dinner time and will either contact you via the school phone or will be allowed to use their mobile phone to call or message.

Please be aware that your child is not going to be able to take calls or pick up messages from you during the day without risking a **School Detention**. As ever, we ask for your continued support with our Detention System. Please do not, under any circumstances tell your child that they cannot or must not sit a detention because you disagree with the school policy: if you wish to discuss a concern or make a complaint, it is important you contact us to let us know. **It is really important that you do not encourage your child to go against the school rules.**

Year 11 Parent/Carer Evening and Sixth Form Open Evening

We are looking forward to seeing parents and carers of our **Year 11** students this **coming Thursday January 9th**. You will not only get your child's latest report but will also experience the special moment they open their **Exam Results** from recent PPE Exams. This experience is key for our Year 11s : finding out now what grades they achieved in their first set of mock exams gives them the time to focus on those areas that need improving and to make the most of the extra support available so they can show themselves at their best when the final examinations arrive. On **Thursday January 16th** you are warmly invited to our re-scheduled **Sixth Form Open Evening**. Hopefully we will not encounter a repeat of the stormy weather that meant we had to change the date! The evening will give you an opportunity to find out about the very special Sixth Form experience on offer here at Colmers and is open to parents and carers from any year group who would like to find out more.



Parent / Carer Forum, Thursday March 12th 5 – 6.30p.m.

Our third parent forum of the year takes place on **Thursday March 12th**. At our last Forum, we had some great discussion about the new Homework Booklets and our new-look school reports. When we meet next, we would like to share with you our next steps with the **Colmers Curriculum**: this has become a big focus nationally and the Forum will be an opportunity to share with you what we are planning from September. As always, your views and ideas will help us on our journey to keep improving. A reminder will follow nearer the time so that you can let me know if you will be attending.

As ever, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any concerns and I will get back to you as soon as possible.

Best wishes,

Emma Leaman
Headteacher

Dates for your Diary

Thursday 9 th January	Year 11 Parents/Carers evening
Thursday 16 th January	Sixth Form Open Evening
Thursday 30 th January	Year 8 Parents/Carers Evening
Thursday 6 th February	Year 12 & 13 Parents/Carers Evening
Mon 17 th Feb – Friday 21 st Feb	Half-Term Holiday
Thursday 12 th March	Parent/Carer Forum