

26 March 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

Reflections on the Spring Term 2021

We have reached the end of another extraordinary term. The nation has been reflecting this week on the unprecedented events of the past year and we have been doing the same. No-one had any idea that a year after schools closed for the first time last March that the situation would still be so bad a year on and there would be a repeat lockdown in the Spring of 2021. We've survived it and pulled together as a community and I want to say again how grateful I am to you, our parents, for your support and understanding throughout this time.

Stour Valley students have been an absolute credit to you and to us and I was delighted to sign 704 (yes, seven hundred and four!) Headteacher Certificates of Commendation in recognition of excellent engagement with online learning this term. I asked teachers to nominate students they felt particularly worthy of praise in their subject areas. Some students will receive multiple certificates. These certificates will be posted home today.

COVID Testing

Thank you for uploading the test results of COVID tests done at home. The government is encouraging families to continue testing twice a week through the Easter holidays. We would request that as a minimum you make sure your child does a test and you upload the result prior to students returning to school on the 12th

April and then you continue with twice weekly testing.

Year 11 Update

We have rearranged the postponed Year 11 Parents' Evening to Thursday 22nd April. Y11 parents will receive a letter today with details about this. The official Y11 leaving date will be Friday 11th June; this provides a week after half term to collate any final pieces of evidence which the exam boards may require and allows for any future COVID outbreaks which may affect students being able to complete any necessary pieces of work. We may bring this forward to May half term if there are no issues to affect the collation of evidence to award GCSE grades. Please do not book any holidays and ensure that attendance is 100% until Friday 11th June.

Return to school after the Easter break

Equipment. Some students have not been as well equipped as we would expect since returning to school. Would you please check that your child has all the required equipment for their return on April 12th. The following is a list of equipment that students should bring to their lessons.

- Ruler
- Pencil case with name clearly marked
- Black or blue biro or handwriting pens, minimum of 2
- HB pencils, minimum of 2, plus pencil sharpener
- Eraser
- Scientific calculator
- Reading book



Uniform. We have not been challenging students for uniform infringements since we returned to school. This was a deliberate decision, with the intention of making the return to school as positive an experience as possible for everybody. The buoyant mood around school would indicate that we have achieved that goal in the three short weeks since returning.

However, the 'uniform amnesty' cannot go on indefinitely. Students have all been informed that normal expectations will resume after the Easter break. Amongst other things this means that: hoodies or sweatshirts should not be worn under the school blazer; any hair colouring should be a natural shade; make-up should be minimal; skirts should reach (and remain at) the knee, and coats/jackets should not be worn inside the school building. Additionally, students should only be wearing trainers on days when they are attending school in their PE kit. Students who persistently refuse to conform with uniform expectations may be subject to sanctions.

We thank you in advance for your ongoing support in helping us to maintain our high standards.

All that remains is for me to wish you all a Happy Easter.

With kind regards

Rachel Kelly
Headteacher

