

11th March 2022

Dear Parents/Guardians

I would like to apologise to parents/guardians for not writing the update earlier in the week as intended. I had set aside time to do this after dropping in to the Year 9 Languages breakfast on Tuesday morning. However, the event was such a joy that I couldn't leave. As a school, we value languages highly and strongly recommend that students study a language in Year 10 and beyond, and I would like to thank Ms Matias, Curriculum Leader for Languages, the Languages teachers and the Year 10 Languages ambassadors for organising and running such an enjoyable event. The majority of Year 9 students attended and were treated to French and Spanish breakfast items and a quiz with fantastic prizes. Following this, students also enjoyed watching the film 'Encanto' (with popcorn provided) in Spanish on Wednesday afternoon and in French on Thursday afternoon in our new theatre hall in the E block. Particularly given the restrictions of COVID over the past two years, to see students enjoying such activities was a real highlight of the term so far.

Residential trips

Another part of school life that has been much missed during the COVID restrictions has been the opportunity for students to attend residential trips. Please click [here](#) to read the details of residential trips currently planned for 2022-23. I trust parents/guardians appreciate the opportunity to make an informed choice. All costs are approximate except for the Rome and Barcelona trips which have already been launched.

British Science Week

British Science Week runs from 11th-20th March 2022 this year with the theme of 'growth'. It is a 10 day celebration of science, technology, engineering and maths. We will be celebrating the week with a variety of activities including a CSI theme to Science lessons for students in Years 7 and 8, as well as Year 9 and 10 students taking part in a virtual escape room. In addition to this, students in Years 7, 8 and 9 have a poster competition for their homework and the very best entries will be entered into the British Science week competition. If you are keen to take part in any science week activities at home as a family or are interested in attending an event near you there are lots of suggestions at <https://www.britishscienceweek.org/>.

Assessments

Year 10 begin their pre-public examinations on Friday 18th March 2022 (click [here](#) for the booklet that has previously been shared) and students preparing for external qualifications this summer will also be sitting assessments over the coming weeks. I know students are working hard towards these assessments and qualifications and I would like to thank parents/guardians for supporting with these. I would also like to thank parents/guardians of Year 13 students who attended last night's Year 13 parents' evening.

COVID-19

Whilst the restrictions have been largely lifted, COVID-19 case numbers have risen slightly both within the school and the wider community and I would like to remind families of the importance of maintaining good hand hygiene and testing if anyone in the household develops symptoms.

Last Friday 4th March 2022, the School-Aged Immunisation Service visited the school to offer students a vaccine against COVID-19. Parents/guardians of students who are in a clinical risk group and aged 5 to 11 years old or who live with someone who is immunosuppressed can get the COVID-19 vaccine, inline with advice set out by the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) (click [here](#)). Eligible children include those with diabetes, immunosuppression and other conditions (click [here](#)). Further information is available (click [here](#)) including frequently asked questions (click [here](#)).

Social media

I am sure that many families enjoy watching videos on TikTok. However, I would like to request that parents remain vigilant in monitoring their child's use of Tik Tok and other social media platforms. As the Russian invasion of Ukraine develops, more and more citizens of Ukraine are sharing clips of their city being under siege. These can be frightening and distressing images for adults, let alone young children. Please click [here](#) for information for parents/guardians about TikTok.

I would also like to raise awareness of the app 'YUBO' or 'Yellow' that has been promoted as a dating app for under-18s. This app promotes live streaming as the primary chat method, allows chat groups to be set up with no filters and replicates apps like Tinder. Again, I would urge all parents/guardians to please monitor your child's use of social media platforms.

Walking Zone Maps

I am delighted that Hillingdon Council have produced a Walking Zone Map for our school to encourage more sustainable travel and better air quality. Please click [here](#) to see the map, which shows walking zones of 10 and 15 minutes around the school. The map is designed to reduce traffic and make it safer for pedestrians and cyclists and I hope parents/guardians are able to use the map to consider greener ways for travelling in the local area.

Finally, I would like to wish all members of the school community a peaceful weekend.

Yours sincerely



Gareth Davies
Headteacher