



(A registered Charity No. 309648)

1st January 2022

Dear Parents,

I hope you are enjoying a happy and restful Christmas break. I am looking forward to seeing you and your children next Thursday 6th January from 8.15am, with the Pre-Prep children arriving via the Courtney's entrance on Bell Lane and the Prep children coming in through the Big Blue Door, as per last term. Please can I ask that you do not arrive in advance of 8.15am, as I am keen that we keep any congestion around the school periphery to a minimum in consideration of our neighbours.

Staffing

I am looking forward to welcoming Penny Gibson, our new member of the Office team and my new PA, and our two new Gappies for the term, Elizabeth Findlay and Ben Hudson. Elizabeth and Ben are both very sporty and are looking forward to working with the children on the sports pitches as well as in many other capacities. In addition, Matthew Watts joins us from Tuesday in the Interim Bursar role, and he will in all likelihood be with us until at least the beginning of May. Matthew has held positions at a number of schools and has considerable experience of working in such roles, before which before which he served in the Army, worked in finance in the City and for the NHS. He can be contacted on the bursar@ruperthouse.oxon.sch.uk email address. Brandon Ashton, who conducted Mr Rawlingson's appraisal last year, has been very helpful in assisting us with identifying the specific skillsets which are required in this interim role, and he felt on reflection that someone like Matthew would be much more qualified to undertake the role than himself. We are also likely to be looking to appoint an interim Assistant Bursar in the coming weeks, to take on aspects of Mrs Rawlingson's former role and in greater support of the Interim Bursar.

COVID

I do hope you and your family have managed to stay healthy over Christmas and have avoided COVID. With our eldest having had the virus over half term and with my wife having contracted it just before the end of term, we have experienced first-hand just how awful the disease is and the challenges it presents when household members are having to self-isolate. I would be most grateful if you would please continue to be vigilant with your children and for them not to come into school if they are displaying any symptoms (please keep them off school until they have received a negative PCR test). If your child lives in the same household as someone with COVID-19, they are not legally required to self-isolate. However, please could they take an LFD test every day for 7 days, and self-isolate if any of these test results is positive or if they develop any symptoms, in which case they must have a PCR test. While your child is awaiting their PCR result, we would ask that you please keep them at home. More information can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

We will have to see what the new year brings in terms of infection rates, but at least the period of isolation has been reduced (negative LFDs on Days 6&7 mean that one can be back in circulation from Day 8, if no symptoms are being displayed). I will of course share any changes in Government guidance with you as soon as I hear anything, but in the meantime, we are planning to return with classroom ventilation, regular hand-sanitising and the one-way system, as per the end of last term.

Rest

Finally, following the busyness of Christmas, I shared the below article which I had found very thought-provoking with the staff. I thought you also might find it an interesting (and fairly brief) read:

<https://ideas-ted-com.cdn.ampproject.org/c/s/ideas.ted.com/the-7-types-of-rest-that-every-person-needs/amp/>

I wish you a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year and we look forward to welcoming your children back next week.

With best wishes,

Nick Armitage

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