



Re: Headteacher Update March 2025

Uniform Reminders

Polo shirts:

In the summer term, we will move to polo shirts for those who wish to wear these. Please note that last summer, we allowed students to wear a shirt with no tie because polo shirts were a new part of our uniform. This summer, due to the fact our policy has been in existence for two years now, there will be **no shirt without a tie option** as this does not look as smart.

From the 28th April therefore, students can choose to remain in a shirt and tie or they can wear a pale blue polo shirt instead of a shirt and tie up until the end of the school year. All the rest of our uniform remains the same. Please remember that all students have the option of wearing tailored knee length grey shorts in the summer term as well.

Skirts:

You will have seen in the press and on social media the criticism around school skirts and their lengths, which appears to be an issue for many schools. Our take on this matter is that parents/carers have a responsibility to ensure their child is wearing suitable uniform, and if their child chooses to wear a skirt, that it is an appropriate length for school. I therefore request, as I have done previously, that parents/carers ensure if their child wears a skirt to school, that it is a reasonable length and looks smart and appropriate for school. Thank you for your support with this matter.

'High value' trips and visits

It was a delight to be able to share with Estyn during our recent visit the many trips and visits we offer as a school. I want to make parents/carers aware of the difficult position we are in however, when a trip has more interest than we have capacity. For example, the recent ski trip that went out for interest for next year's Y8 had over 100 expressions of interest for 50 places. We know that this sadly leaves more than 50 students disappointed. As ski trips need one member of staff per 10 children, we cannot increase the number of students we take, as this will not leave enough staff in the school to run the curriculum and school effectively for the rest of our young people.

As I have mentioned in previous updates, we are currently implementing a system to ensure that students have a fair chance at being picked for trips. As part of this system, it is important for parents/carers to be aware that not all trips have the same 'value'. We plan for 'high value trips' (those that involve foreign travel and overnight stays) to be categorised together in our new system, so if for example your child is randomly selected to go skiing in Y8, their name may not be able to go into the hat for the next foreign/adventurous trip; this will give other students the chance to be pulled out of the hat who have not already attended a trip of this nature. We hope that this helps the situation and ensures all students have a fairer chance of being selected for 'high value trips'. Please be aware that in this new system, a day trip (such as to the cinema or to watch a rugby match) doesn't have the same value as a ski trip, for example.

J Block Work

The work is progressing well on our new ALN facilities in J block and there will be further work completed during the rest of this term and in the Easter holidays. We hope this work will be complete soon after Easter and we will have some fantastic new facilities for our ALN students. We are also refurbishing other classrooms in the block at the same time and I am looking forward to our students being able to use these fresh facilities. I know the authority have also planned some investment into F block, which we are also looking forward to and I hope to update you on this in due course.

Public Examinations

It is nearly the time of year when students in Y10-Y13 will sit public examinations. As I mentioned in previous headteacher updates, on the 3rd April we would like to invite Y10-13 parents/carers to the main hall for a short presentation on how you can help your child revise. The talk will focus on our study support hub and revision strategies that are proven successful. You and your child are very welcome to attend. The session will begin at 5pm and will be no longer than an hour. Please be aware that we are awaiting confirmation from the LA so that we can make a decision on when study leave starts for Y11, Y12 and Y13. I will get this information to you as soon as it's available.

I look forward to writing to you again with my April update; and in my May Headteacher update, I will be able to write to you about our Estyn report, which is being published on the 28th April.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs L Purcell

Headteacher