

20th December 2021

Dear Parent / Guardian

As we approach the end of term one, I would like once again to thank you for the wonderful support you have given the school. There is no doubt that the challenges of Covid-19 have had an impact on all within the Sperrin Community, however, this term has also brought the return of extra-curricular activities, the House System and Sporting fixtures in addition to an enriched curricular experience which I know has had educational benefits as well as protecting and developing the emotional health and resilience of our young people.

ACHIEVEMENTS

I want to offer special congratulations to our Year 13 pupil Jodie Fullerton for achieving third place in the local stages of the prestigious Soroptimist International Public Speaking competition.

Year 11 Technology and Design pupils, C J Loughlin, Ellie-Mae Close, Kamil Celmerowski and Matthew Doole won a £2000 Technology Support package from Kinia after completing a recent Discover Manufacturing Programme with University College Dublin (UCD). This winning team designed a prototype to improve health for those in the community with an Epipen.

The Geography Department led by Miss McKeown have also secured a grant for £10,381 from Live Here Love Here, Rural Community Pollinator Scheme run by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs. The grant will be used to build a new Polytunnel and a new walkway around the school grounds.

KS3 pupils have been acknowledged in school for top achievement and success against their targets in our recent internal examination series. I want to congratulate all staff and pupils involved in these superb achievements.

Planning ahead, there are several issues I want to highlight to parents and pupils as we begin to focus on the new term:

ACADEMIC REPORTS

KS3 and Year 11 reports will be sent out via Parent App prior to Christmas, with Year 12-14 reports released in early January 2022. Parents are advised to take some time to discuss the grades and outcomes of the report with their child. Pupils will be given an opportunity to reflect on their performance and set new targets in the new term.

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS AND TERM 2 DATES

School will close for all pupils at 3.25pm on Tuesday 21st December and reopen again on Tuesday 4th January 2022 (Week 1). As you are aware, the current situation with the pandemic is very fluid, therefore, if there are any changes to these arrangements, I will notify parents using our normal communication channels, the Parent App and our text message service as soon as possible after the Christmas break.

The emergence of the Omicron variant brings uncertainty in terms of implications for wider society and our school. I would ask you to re-familiarise yourselves with our Contingency Plan published earlier in the term. As an important mitigating measure, ahead of the new term, I would encourage all pupils **to take a lateral flow test 24 hours before their return to school** in January.

OPEN EVENT – 2022

Our online Open Event will be shared early in January 2022. Please see our website and follow our social media for more details.

Finally, I want to wish you all a Peaceful Christmas and a Happy New Year. I look forward to seeing all pupils on Tuesday 4th January 2022.

Yours sincerely,



B A Heron
Principal
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