

December 2021

Dear parents/carers,

Re: End of term updates and JOG News

I hope you and your families are well. At the end of a long term, we thought it would be nice to put together the latest edition of 'JOG News' to highlight just a few of the many great things that have been going on in school over the past few months. Therefore, please find this attached and I hope you enjoy reading through it.

Additionally, I thought that it would be good to summarise a few key messages in preparation for our return to school in the new year. There have been various communications that have been sent separately covering some of this information in more detail, so please do also check the Weduc App for these too.

Christmas holidays and return date

The Christmas holidays are the perfect opportunity for the whole community to get some rest, recuperate and spend time with family. To that end, we will be closing the school site entirely over the festive period and emails/communications will be checked for emergencies only. Tuesday 4th January is an Inset Day and therefore closed to students. **School resumes for students on Wednesday 5th January 2022 at 8.45am.** On return, we will be testing students in line with government guidance (see below and separate communication for further information) but otherwise it will be a normal school day. Please ensure your child attends school on time and in full correct uniform, ready to learn and do their best.

Covid and testing

As you might expect, we are keeping a very close eye on the Covid situation nationally and on DfE communications too. As I write, Plan B restrictions are in place nationally. Whilst this hasn't brought any operational changes for the school, there are some other changes that may be worth noting, including the change to how you should respond if you are identified as a close contact. The updated government guidance can be found here: <https://bit.ly/3p15RIk>

As I mentioned above, you should have received a communication regarding testing on return to school in January. We are testing all consenting students once using a Lateral Flow Device during the day on Wednesday 5th January. We have assumed consent status remains the same as it was before. These tests are in line with DfE instructions to all secondary schools and will take place during the day, so there may be a little interruption to lessons. During the holidays, please continue to test at least twice a week using the LFD kits provided.

New website

You may have noticed that we have launched our new website recently. We're really proud of how it looks and expresses our values. As you would imagine. There has been a lot of work that has gone into the redesign and moving content over and we are still in the process of making sure that everything is organised as we want it to be. Therefore, please be patient with us whilst we finalise the content, which is currently a direct copy of our last website. If you'd like to offer any constructive feedback on the new website, please do drop the school an email as it would be most welcome! The website can be found here: <https://www.johnogauntschool.co.uk/>

Staffing

Mr Smith has sent a communication out earlier in the week, confirming the permanent appointment of Miss Barnes to the role of Progress leader for Years 8 and 9. We were delighted by her appointment following a rigorous process in school and we have now reverted to our preferred roles and responsibilities for Progress Leaders.

During the last half term, we also welcomed Miss Mitchell as a permanent teacher of Geography. Miss Mitchell started her time with us just after half term – never an easy time of year to start a new job. She is working hard to get to know students and despite only being with us a short time, has already become an established member of the team. We also welcomed back Mrs Abdelghany to the Science team as their technician. Mrs Abdelghany has already worked wonders ensuring we can resume live practical experiments in lessons and supporting the teachers more widely. Finally, Mrs Quigley has been appointed to the Senior Leadership Team on secondment for a year. She will continue as Head of Faculty alongside her secondment role and will be working with the Vice Principal leading on our Pupil Premium strategy, as well as undertaking the wide range of other duties a senior role brings. She has already added so much value to the team and we are delighted with her appointment.

Uniform and conduct

Mr Smith sent out a communication recently about our updated uniform policy, which can be found alongside our updated behaviour for learning policy on the website. Whilst the uniform has not changed, we hope that the revised policies help to clarify our expectations of uniform and conduct. Please do take a few minutes to read and digest both documents and support us by reminding your child/ren of our rightly high expectations before we return in January.

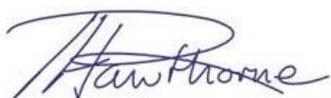
I always say to students that they simply need to do three things; work hard, try their best and follow the rules. I know that it's more nuanced than that of course, but as a basic mantra at home as well as in school, it will go a long way to helping us focus on education and learning.

PSA

I wanted to take a few moments here to offer my huge thanks to our Parent School Association, who have worked tirelessly again over the last term, battling Covid restrictions and the challenges of being a small team, to continue fundraising for the benefit of all students at JOG. The PSA relies solely on the time and energy of parent volunteers and I would make a plea here for you to support them in any way that you can going forwards. The funds they raise have supported so many students over the years and helped provide equipment and enriching opportunities that add so much to the school. You can find out a little more about them on our website by navigating here: <https://www.johnogauntschool.co.uk/about-jog/parent-school-association/>

Finally, I would just like to offer my heartfelt thanks to every member of our brilliant community for your support over the last term. I remain immensely proud to be part of it and wish you and your families a peaceful and merry Christmas and new year.

Yours sincerely,



Mr R Hawthorne
Head of School

Enc – JOG News