

22nd October 2021

Dear parents/carers,

Re: end of term update

I hope this letter finds you well. As we have reached the end of this half term, I thought I would write with one or two updates.

Firstly, and as ever, I want to thank you for your ongoing support for the school and your children. Whilst we have been able to enjoy far more normality than last year there has still been a lot for students and families to contend with. What has been most noticeable is the effort and hard work that our students have been demonstrating every day, working alongside dedicated staff too. I'm really proud to work alongside them all!

COVID update

As you will no doubt have seen, there is a lot of talk about rising COVID cases in the local and national media at the moment. We have already written to you in the past few weeks about cases at JOG and passed on letters from West Berkshire Local Authority in recent days.

Whilst we have seen a rise in cases here, I wanted to let you know that we continue to adhere to the advice and guidance we are given and are working closely with the relevant authorities, such as the local authority, Public Health England and the DfE. As I write, there have been no changes to national guidance or that issued to schools by the DfE. School remains safe and fully open and attendance remains mandatory for all students, unless unwell.

As per the letter from West Berkshire sent earlier this week, face coverings will continue to be required for at least the first two weeks of the new half term, alongside the normal measures we have in place, such as regular cleaning, sanitisation and ventilation. Of course, if anything changes we will be in touch again.

Staffing

On 1st November we will be joined by Miss Mitchell as our new full time permanent Geography teacher, and I know she is excited to start and has lots of forward-thinking ideas about enhancing Geography at JOG. I'm delighted to announce that Mrs Quigley has been successful in her application to become a Seconded Senior Leader in school. Whilst this means that she will have some additional responsibilities as a fully active member of the school leadership, she will continue in her role as Head of Faculty focussing on ensuring a high-quality education in English, Drama and Music. Congratulations to both Miss Mitchell and Mrs Quigley.

Uniform and mobile phones

Students have presented themselves very smartly indeed this half term and I appreciate your ongoing support for this too. As we approach winter, I wanted to drop in a quick reminder that mobile phones **must** be switched off and in a bag during school hours and that we have a clear dress-code. I have therefore included this as an appendix at the end of this letter. The key message I'd like to convey here is that, as we approach winter, hoodies are **not** permitted for any reason. Therefore please do ensure that your child has a suitable coat or jumper in line with our dress-code.

We continue to use a pass system for occasions where, by agreement, students can deviate from the dress-code. Yellow (one-day) passes are issued by tutors/teachers. Red (short-term) passes must be agreed with a Progress Leader or senior member of staff. A note from home is required in every case.

Items of clothing (such as a hoodie) that are worn and do not adhere to our policy will be confiscated as will mobile phones seen out in school. For a first occasion the phone/item will be returned to the child at the end of the school day via Main Reception. If it happens on more than one occasion, we will ask a parent/carer to collect the item from school.

Open Evening

As you may be aware, we held our annual Open Evening on Thursday 14th October and Open Morning the following day. Of course, these events are about helping families choose a suitable secondary school but I also believe they are an opportunity to showcase what a truly great school John O'Gaunt is and said so to both staff and students. I wanted to publicly state here my thanks to them all, but especially our student helpers, who certainly took those comments to heart and were a credit to their school. We took some feedback during both events and it was overwhelmingly positive about the school but most importantly about our students.

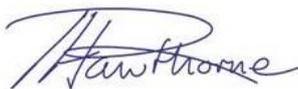
Open Evening was not the only positive of the term. As ever, there has been a great deal going on in school and too many to mention without a longer letter, so I'll leave most to our end of term newsletter in December. However, I do want to highlight one or two things. Firstly, our new Year 7 intake has settled really well into life at Secondary School. They really are a super cohort, and it has been a total pleasure getting to know them and we enjoy the extra buzz that they bring to the school. They've joined a group of students who have been working hard and doing their best in lessons and we're constantly impressed by their ongoing resilience.

I'd also mention our 'JOG Freshers Fayre', which saw more than 250 students sign up for extra-curricular activities and clubs, including 'Young PSA', silversmithing, Dodgeball, model making and a maths club to name just a few. In a small school, to have nearly two thirds of your cohort sign up to enrichment activities is a testament to the students and the staff who give up their time to run them.

Finally, I'd just like to wish Year 11 students best of luck for their forthcoming Mock Exams after half term. In class and the numerous revision sessions we've been running, most are taking them seriously and working hard to ensure they do their best. These ones may end up counting so I'm glad about that! I hope half term will see them rest and revise accordingly.

Whatever you are doing, I hope that you have a peaceful and enjoyable half term and stay safe and we look forward to seeing our students back on Monday 1st November.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mr R Hawthorne". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'H'.

Mr R Hawthorne
Head of School

At John O'Gaunt uniform is an essential part of the school and one which develops our ethos. It creates a community, a sense of belonging and purpose for all students. Students at JOG represent our school in the wider community and with this in mind they are expected to maintain high standards of behaviour when wearing their uniform, including travelling to and from school.

This policy will be reviewed on a continuous basis.

Items of clothing can be purchased online from our official uniform/sports kit supplier, and we have included the website address below for your information. Many items can be purchased from other school wear shops or for example, departments in Tesco, Asda, Marks and Spencer and Sainsburys.

Dress-code:

- Blazer - Dark navy with school badge (badge displaying hall colours). **This must be purchased from the school shop: <https://www.skoolkit.co.uk/>**
- Trousers – black or grey trousers, which must be tailored, straight legged and full length
- Shirt: White formal school shirt, button to neck with collar suitable for wearing with a tie OR standard design white open-necked blouse.
- Skirts – Plain black skirts can be worn but must be the standard skirt
- School tie – all students wear one
- Jumper (optional): Plain, navy, v-necked with the school logo/badge (not a cardigan)
- Footwear – Black [NOT boots or trainers], sensible, safe and suitable for the task these should be plain
- Socks: Black, navy or white
- Tights: Navy, black or neutral

Please check the items shown in the 'Guide' included below thoroughly and ensure that you are clear on what is expected at John O'Gaunt. If you have any doubt regarding choice of uniform please check with the school before making a purchase.

Items of clothing (such as a hoodie or cap) that are worn and do not adhere to our policy will be **confiscated**. For a first offense the phone/item will be returned to the child at the end of the school day via Main Reception. If it happens on more than one occasion, we will ask a parent/carer to collect the item from school.

Mobile phones

We understand the need that students will need these for travelling to and from school. During school hours they **must** be turned off and placed in bags. Mobile phones cannot be used in class.

If a phone is seen it will be **confiscated**. For a first offense the phone/item will be returned to the child at the end of the school day via Main Reception. If it happens on more than one occasion, we will ask a parent/carer to collect the phone from school. On rare occasions, a student may be permitted to use a mobile phone, such as for clarification of homework using Class Charts or a parental number, this can only be done when **permission is given by a member of staff**.

No responsibility can be taken for loss or theft of any items of uniform or jewellery, including mobile phones. It is essential that all items are marked with the owner's name.

Guide

Please use this guide for the school uniform which is required for years 7-11 it will outline what is and is not acceptable. **This list is not exhaustive.**

Acceptable		Not Acceptable
	<p>Blazers:</p> <p>Dark navy with school badge (badge displaying House colours)</p> <p>Blazers should be worn at all times</p>	<p>This can be purchased from Skoolkit</p> <p>No other blazer is permitted</p> <p>During unusually hot weather – students will be informed whether it is optional</p>
	<p>Skirts:</p> <p>Plain, navy or black skirts can be worn but must be the standard skirt</p> <p>Worn just above the knee and as it was intended to be worn (i.e. no rolling)</p>	
	<p>Jumpers (optional)</p> <p>Either with the school logo only or plain black or navy and v-necked</p>	<p>No alternative jumpers are allowed.</p> <p>No cardigans, sweaters with a logo or pictures or</p> <p>No hoodies</p> 
	<p>Shirts</p> <p>White formal school shirt, button to neck with collar suitable for wearing with a tie. Top button done up.</p> <p>Tie John O’Gaunt striped</p>	<p>No polo shirts or visible coloured long sleeve under shirts</p> <p>No logos</p> 

Acceptable		Not Acceptable
	<p>Trousers</p> <p>Black or grey trousers, which must be tailored, straight legged and full length</p>	<p>No fashion styles e.g. combat style cropped, jeggings, leggings, baggy, jeans/denim or skinny trousers.</p> <p>No stretch material, low fitting or branded items.</p> <p>No trousers with metal studs, rips, fake zips.</p> 
	<p>Shoes</p> <p>Black [NOT boots or trainers/shoe-style trainers], sensible, safe and suitable for the task. These should be plain</p>	<p>No heels, canvas, boots, trainers or skate shoes. No fashion brands, styles or accessories</p> <p>No alternative-coloured soles or laces.</p> <p>No coloured or branded logos.</p> 

Acceptable		Not Acceptable
	<p>Socks</p> <p>Black, grey, navy or white. Socks should be an appropriate length.</p> <p>Tights</p> <p>Navy, black or neutral</p>	
	<p>Jewellery</p> <p>Earrings: One stud in each ear.</p> <p>Wristwatch maybe worn</p>	<p>No facial, oral or body piercings including nose studs, stretches in ear, tongue piercings or eyebrow bars.</p>  <p>No ankle chains or beads</p> <p>Nothing to be worn on the wrist apart from a watch</p>
	<p>Hair</p> <p>Hairstyles should be neat and tidy. Hair styles should be moderate and a natural colour. The styles should also reflect the general expectations of the uniform policy and those of a professional office environment. Long hair should be tied back for some activities: D&T, PE, and Science</p>	<p>No extreme or unnatural colours (e.g. either whole, half-head colouring or just at the ends), extensions or additions on any part of the hair</p> <p>No extreme haircuts or shaved patterns, tramlines, shaved heads</p>
	<p>Make up</p> <p>Discreet, natural looking make-up, worn sensibly. Neutral nail varnish</p>	<p>No excessive make up e.g. thick eyeliner, dark brows, or lipstick</p> <p>Coloured nail varnish is not acceptable. No artificial nails. Your child may be told to remove colour or extensions in school</p>
	<p>Outdoor coats</p> <p>Should be plain and waterproof</p>	<p>Hooded sweatshirts (“Hoodies”) are not permitted.</p> <p>No outdoor coat to be worn inside. No scarves inside school</p>

SPORTS KIT			
		John O'Gaunt polo shirt	No other polo shirt allowed
		John O'Gaunt shorts John O'Gaunt Skort	No other shorts or skort allowed
		John O'Gaunt outdoor rugby shirt	No other outdoor top allowed
		John O'Gaunt socks White ankle socks	

Additional items required:

Astro trainers, Football boots, shin pads, Gum shield, swimming shorts/costume depending on the activity.

A student, who cannot participate in a P.E. lesson at any time, must bring a note from parents, giving reasons, or a doctor's certificate if the absence is likely to be prolonged. It is advisable that non-participants should bring suitable clothing to protect them from the elements, especially during the winter months.

SCHOOL UNIFORM SUPPLIER = Skoolkit

Address: The Mall, The Kennet Centre, Newbury RG14 5EN

Tel: 01635 38285

Web: <https://www.skoolkit.co.uk/>