



8 January 2018

Dear Parents and Carers

May I start by wishing you all a 'Happy New Year' I hope that you had a wonderful Christmas and that 2018 brings you joy and fulfilment.

I was delighted by the start that students made last week. They came back from their break refreshed and mostly raring to go. I must thank you for your efforts to ensure that students were dressed impeccably in their uniforms. I am so very proud of them and grateful to you, especially when I see them on their journeys to and from school: they really do make a good impression and are wonderful ambassadors for the school. Areas to address are students who have had acrylic or 'gel' nails put on for the festive season; these must be removed as we do not permit any nail embellishments, including varnish. Please may I also remind you that we only permit one pair of stud earrings (one in each ear), minimal make-up and no facial piercings. Please may I also request that hair styles are not extreme; some boys have had some very short hair cuts over the holiday.

Spring Term 2018

There are two areas that I would like to focus on this half-term, in addition to everything else that we do. The first relates to developing students' confidence and skill with their spoken language and we will be working across the curriculum this term to show students how powerful the spoken word is. We will be looking at debating skills and we will be developing students' oral vocabulary. To launch this, I have set a competition for students in Year 7-10 to prepare and deliver a three-minute speech to convince, persuade, inspire or inform me about a topic of their choice. Mr Hampton, Heads of Year and Tutors will be leading on this. I have also written to two local MPs to see if the winner and his or her family could be given a tour of the Houses of Parliament as the first prize. I do hope that your child will get involved.

The second area that I would like to explore this term is to become smarter with marking. In truth, I would much rather that our teachers had more time to plan dynamic and fully differentiated ALPS lessons rather than the hours that some spend marking. However, I am also absolutely convinced that regular and timely monitoring of all students' work is instrumental in raising standards. Therefore, over the next term, some Heads of Department will be experimenting with different ways of marking with Years 7-9. This will enable them to see what works and what doesn't before re-visiting their marking policies in the summer term. If your child is taught by a Head of Department, you may therefore notice some differences in his or her marking. What we are aiming for is more planning time and less marking time without compromising standards. As always, please contact us immediately if you feel that your child's progress is not enhanced by new methods. It would also be enormously helpful if you could sign off some of your child's work so that you become active in monitoring presentation, handwriting and spelling. Mrs Antcliff will write to you in due course with precise details of what to expect so that you are fully informed.



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Visits to School

I often take visitors or prospective parents and carers around the school on a Friday morning. I realise that this is difficult for working parents and carers but should you, as a current parent or carer like to see the school in action, I would like to extend this offer to you. If you would like to make an appointment for a tour and learning walk on a Friday morning, please do contact my PA, Mrs Stephenson on stephensonj@jfcs.org.uk.

Key Dates for the Term

Tuesday 16 January – 7pm - Year 9 Options evening with SLT and Heads of Department

Wednesday 24 January – 9J and 9F Parents evening (Academic progress report for all subjects)

Friday 26 January – Academic Monitoring report will be issued to parents and carers of students in Years 7-10

Wednesday 31 January – Year 11 Academic reports will be issued

Thursday 1 February – 9C and 9S Parents evening (Academic progress report for all subjects)

Friday 9 February – Deadline for Year 10 applications for Prefects and Learning Ambassadors to Mrs Davies.

Such a busy term but we're going to have fun on the way!

Yours sincerely



Mrs L Walton

Headteacher