

9<sup>th</sup> February 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

I hope this latest communication finds you safe and well as we enter the final week before half-term.

Obviously, the latest inclement weather has presented one or two difficulties in ensuring that we are able to fully staff the school for those students that are attending as well as to ensure that the site is safe for the whole community. We decided to close early on Monday to ensure that all can get home safely and we will, of course, update parents with any further developments or announcements throughout the course of the week. If your child is for any reason adversely affected by an early closure and requires supervision at the end of the day, please inform us through the normal channels so that we can arrange for them to be supervised until they get picked up or can go home safely.

Most importantly, and naturally on everyone's mind at the current time, is the much debated issue of when schools will be allowed to fully re-open. It goes without saying that this cannot come soon enough and I know that I speak for all staff when I say that it will give us all enormous pleasure to see the students walking down the drive once again. Other than the Prime Minister's statement that any re-opening will be on the 8<sup>th</sup> March at the earliest, we do not have any further details to be able to provide for you at the current time. I will, therefore, be listening to developments keenly over the half-term break and will inform you of any plans for re-opening as soon as I am able.

I am delighted to remind you that this Friday will see us introducing the first 'Screen Free' day for Oakwood. We are conscious that this term has been a very stressful and trying time for everybody. We are delighted with the engagement of our students, both in their work and their Tutor group well-being sessions, but increasingly aware that that being in front of screens for sustained periods of time is not conducive to the general health and well-being of our young people. To this end, on Friday all tasks set will need to be completed "away from screens" and students can choose to engage with a range of "non-digital" activities, based around P.E. and Technology, which they can do and send evidence of completion to their Tutor if they so choose. Students can of course, choose to use this time to catch up with work if they wish – but there will be no compulsion for them to do this and it will be their choice. Students who are attending school on that day will be able to take part in the same P.E. and Technology activities as other students.

Many thanks indeed to the many parents who attended the Year 11 on-line Parents' Evening. Staff spoke very positively about the appointments held and, judging by the comments we have received from parents, the meetings were well received. We next turn our attention to Year 9 as they approach the time of year for embarking on the Options process. To this end, Mrs Dunford will be sending out a letter and the Options booklet at the end of this week and video presentations from the various subject areas will be going live on the school website from the 25<sup>th</sup> February 2021. All relevant details of the process will be contained in the forthcoming letter.

"Drop Everything And Read" will continue this week (Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> February Period 4). The work for this will be set by Miss Jackson for the whole of Key Stage 3 even if Miss Jackson is not your teacher. The assignment will come up as a History assignment due to the way Show My Homework is configured.

**Achieving Excellence Together**

And finally, we will shortly be releasing our latest selection of messages from our staff to our students. Also available will be a short video message from myself, both of which can be accessed via the website ( <https://www.oakwood.surrey.sch.uk/1468/whole-school> ). As I mentioned earlier, we are all so eager to see them return to school and I hope this latest selection will serve to remind them that we are very much thinking of them. I hope that you and your family will get some well-deserved time to enjoy the half-term break together, with not too much school work or screen time, and I look forward to writing to you again soon.

Onward and upward,

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S Potten', with a long horizontal line extending to the right from the end of the signature.

Mr S Potten  
Headteacher