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13<sup>th</sup> May 2021

Dear parents/carers,

**Re: update following government's announcement**

Since March, as a school, we have been very busy attending training and information sessions to ensure our policies and procedures for our year 11 and year 13 Centre Assessed Grades (CAGs) are completed so that the CAGs are as accurate and as fair as they can be. There will be more important information sent out in the coming days so if you have a child in year 11 and/or year 13, we would be grateful if you could read the information very carefully. It is incredibly important that families understand the policy and procedures that we will be following to ensure that there is parity across subjects and across the school.

Since our full opening back in March our catch-up plan has well and truly begun with the objective to establish greater focus, motivation and engagement amongst targeted students. Our strategies aim to address issues in Years 7 to 13 in order to improve knowledge, understanding and attitudes to learning following the Spring lockdown 2021.

There has been mentoring sessions with a large number of students either through their form tutor, their house team or members of the Senior Leadership Team. This is part of our long-term strategy to ensure the impact of the last 12 months can be mitigated over the next couple of years.

It is important that as we carry on moving towards a new normality, you continue completing the lateral flow tests with your child twice per week at home (Mondays and Thursdays before coming into school or the night before) to prevent the spread of the virus.

As many families will be aware, we pride ourselves on our high standards and expectations. We always say to our students that if we get the basics right, the rest will follow and how this continues to be important when they leave us and move onto our sixth form, college, apprenticeships, universities and careers. We have support from the vast majority of our 2000 families most of the time and we are very proud of the great relationships that we build with you as we believe that this is how we will get the best out of your children. We also teach our students the importance of being kind and having positive attitudes, including on social media and how anything that is posted is public and can affect the person/people you may be writing about. This is important as throughout lockdown your children have been using devices far more often. Most students have shown great resilience throughout this pandemic though some students continue to struggle with the ever-changing situation therefore I would like to remind you that your child can access wellbeing support online via [www.Kooth.com](http://www.Kooth.com) 24 hours a day.

To ensure that there is absolute clarity as we continue along the roadmap out of lockdown and we begin to return to a position where full school uniform must be adhered to, next

month we anticipate being able to start using the changing rooms for the first time since last March. At that point, all students will wear full school uniform and bring PE kit to change. For now, students should only wear appropriate PE kit on the days that they have PE therefore hoodies, trainers and other fashion clothes will be unacceptable.

In line with our usual policy, we will move to our summer uniform on our return after half term. As always, once the summer uniform policy is implemented from Monday 7<sup>th</sup> June, students will be able to remove their blazers or jumpers should they need to, to ensure they remain comfortable and attentive throughout the school day as the weather gets warmer. They will also be expected to continue wearing their school tie at all times.

For further information, our full uniform policy can be found here:

<https://www.aspirebelievesucceed.com/page/?title=Policies&pid=37>

On Monday evening, the Prime minister announced that masks will no longer be needed to be worn in classrooms from next Monday 17<sup>th</sup> May. However, as a school it has been one of the risk measures that has helped ensure our transmission rates remained very low and Sandwell have advised for their continued use in communal areas. This is also the scientific advice provided to the government by SAGE only last Friday. Therefore, from Monday 17<sup>th</sup> May, masks will still be required to be worn on corridors and communal spaces like the dining hall at Phoenix. The masks have helped ensure that we have been consistently fully open since March 8<sup>th</sup>. This stance will be reviewed again after half term.

I will write to you once again when we have further information as we move along the Roadmap to recovery.

Yours faithfully,



Mike Smith  
Head teacher

