

12 July 2022

Dear Parents and Carers

**Re: End of summer term and start of Autumn term arrangements**

I want to start this letter by thanking you for all your support over this year; can I ask you to pass on these thanks to your children as well. Whilst we haven't had any lockdowns, as in previous years, we have continued to face the challenges of COVID including staff illness, student illness and the return to GCSE exams, we have as a school community begun to return to normal. D of E has run across three years groups, with a record number of expeditions, we have been to the theatre and theatre productions have returned to school, we returned to our tradition of Year 7 going to a pantomime, geography field trip, sports fixtures are back, music concert and drama performances have returned, and we are planning Iceland, Berlin and skiing; we have come a long way and that is down to everyone in the community, thank you. I have to say, that despite these challenges it has, as ever, been a privilege to be the Headteacher at this school. Staff and students alike have been a credit to our community. I thank all of the staff here at Pensby, they have worked incredibly hard throughout a very difficult year, thank you.

**End of Term Arrangements**

Term ends on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> July 2022 at 12:30pm, food served at breaktime. Students will finish at the end of lesson 3 at 12.30 pm and make their way home. Please be aware that the only buses that will be available will be normal service buses; school buses will not run at the time students are departing for home. It is therefore essential that all students have made appropriate arrangements for their journey home on the last day of term. If for any reason these arrangements present specific difficulties then please would you contact the school in advance so that appropriate provision can be made for your child. We will of course keep children in school and safe until 3.15pm. However, I am sure that every student would want to begin their summer holiday as soon as that final bell goes.

**KEY DATES:**

**Examination Results:**

GCSE examination results will be available for students on **Thursday 25th August 2022**.

Individual letters and appointment times have been sent by post to all Year 11 parents. Please check your allotted time and follow the instructions on your letter please.

Our Year 11 have had to deal with a significant amount of challenge including the COVID lockdowns and the unknown aspects of the changes to their GCSE courses: the vast majority have coped with these changes with resilience, good humour and have had a positive mindset despite the challenges they have faced. They are a credit to you as parents, the staff here and most of all themselves. I would particularly like to thank them for all their efforts this year, it has not been an easy few years to prepare for GCSE's. It would have been very easy to feel aggrieved that they are the year group thrown back into exams, but they were brilliant!

**Arrangements for the start of term in September**

We are hopeful that September 2022 is the first start to the year in a while without lateral flow testing, however, with the recent increases in COVID nationally we are aware things may change quickly. If there are any changes we

will write and let you know. Please be mindful that we have been made aware of changes at short notice previously and it may be that I have to write to you during the summer holiday.

**Friday 2 September 2022 - Year 7 students only are in school**

Year 7 attend school from 8.35 am and go straight to the main school hall please.

**Monday 5 September 2022**

All students in ALL years return to school for normal start time – 8.35am on site, to be in form rooms by 8.40am.

As we return to school I would be grateful if you would ensure that we have the correct uniform and equipment ready to start the new school. Your support in this matter is very much appreciated. Full details of the school uniform can be found on the school website: <http://www.pensbyhighschool.org/search/school-uniform/58942.html>. The tone for the year is set in those first few weeks back and we know that being punctual, prepared to learn and dressed in appropriate uniform, all help to secure a positive attitude towards education and a commitment to succeed which carries students through the long term ahead. Uniform is important for a shared sense of community, an obvious pride in who we are as individuals and the school we go to, but at an even more basic level it is about routines and preparation. If we cannot put a pair of shoes on, or we want to argue about the length of a skirt, this tends to be a precursor to arguing about lessons and learning. I have to say that our students do, on the whole, look great and they take this into everything they do at school and it is a testimony to the effort that you put in as parents and carers, I am grateful, thank you.

You are absolutely key in setting the tone: I cannot overstate the importance your support plays in the success of our children, but I do though understand that now more than ever some families may need help. Fuss Wirral can help support families: <https://wirralfuss.co.uk/> and I have a small discretionary fund to help as well, please ask and we will try our best. Can I also ask that if you have uniform that another family can make use of, you donate to FUSS, either directly or if you bring it into school we can pass it on. Can I also remind everyone that we do have breakfast club in the morning, students can get a drink, some toast or cereal and start the day with some breakfast. This is open to all and there is no charge. As a school we also employ a 'family advocate' – Di Challinor, Di can help with support in terms of relationships with school, but Di can also signpost and support wider needs, seek benefit support, advice on housing and health needs for families, not just the children at our school.

I would also ask that again we refocus on attendance and punctuality please. I don't think that any school has seen attendance return to pre-pandemic levels, but we need students back to close gaps. Gaps both in terms of their learning, but perhaps more importantly in terms of their friends, their mental/physical well-being and their wider social skills. We know that students who attend more, who are better prepared, who have parents that support their learning do better as a result and we know that in turn impacts on how long and healthy our lives are, choices for employment, positive impacts on our children and grandchildren, and a huge rise in health and well-being, that is the power of education!

Your engagement with your child's education, asking them questions, challenging them to do better and the interest you show are a huge part of their success. We cannot as parents 'fix' things for our children, we cannot do the learning for them, but I promise you that your children tell us about the difference your interest in them and their learning makes to them.

Your children are a credit to you; I am proud and privileged to have the opportunity to lead the school your children attend. They are a credit to you and themselves, we are all immensely proud of them and they deserve a good summer, as do you.

I hope that you have a lovely summer and enjoy all the time you have together as a family.

Yours sincerely



Mr K Flanagan  
Headteacher