



Dear parents and carers,

I am writing to you regarding the end of term.

As you may know, the Department for Education has suggested schools should take an INSET day (a staff training day) next Friday, 18th December. You may have also seen that this evening the Welsh government announced that all secondary schools will move to online teaching for the last week of term. The rationale behind both decisions is to provide a longer break between students being in school and mixing with elderly relatives over the festive periods, which it is hoped will reduce the risk of any transmission of COVID-19.

As a result, I have decided to switch our INSET day which was scheduled for Monday 19<sup>th</sup> April to Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December. This means that the last day of term for students will now be Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> December.

The summer term will now begin on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> April, instead of Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup>, so that students still have a full academic year of 190 days. You can view our updated term dates here. I'm also pleased to confirm that we will be offering a programme of online masterclasses to Year 11 students on Friday 18<sup>th</sup>; these are optional but we strongly encourage them to attend!

I am aware there are strong preferences on both sides of this decision, so I hope you will agree with me that this is a balanced approach. I am sorry to only give you a week's notice, but this is a result of the DfE announcing this so late in the term. I am as frustrated by this as you are. I suspect that a lot of schools will make the same decision in the next few days; I am already aware that a significant number of our staff will have to remain at home on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> because their children's primary schools have closed. I hope that by making this decision now rather than waiting until next week, we have given you as much notice as possible and reduced any inconvenience caused.

With best wishes,

Mr Farmbrough,

Headteacher