

14th September 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

I would like to start by extending a warm welcome to all our new students and their families as well as those returning after the summer break.

Staff news

As well as 216 new Year 7 students, we are also delighted to be able to welcome some new members of staff. These are Mrs Hill who is our new assistant Headteacher with responsibility for Inclusion and SEND, and Miss Crowson who is joining the PE department. We also welcome back Mrs McGuigan to the History department, and Mrs Statton to the Design Technology team, after their respective maternity leaves.

Home Covid Testing

We have now completed the cycle of school based Covid Testing that schools were asked to complete with students as they re-opened for the new academic year. And so we are now reverting back to Home Covid Testing for all those that have given consent to be tested. Public Health England have asked that families continue with this testing (twice each week), until at least the end of the month when the system will be reviewed and a further announcement will be made.

Each student should complete two tests each week, and it is our suggestion that these be done on Sunday and Thursday evening, but if that is not convenient, please do swap to days that are more convenient for you.

This afternoon each student has been issued with a fresh batch of Covid Tests to bring home. In the case of Year 7 we have labelled the boxes with information about reporting the results to the school and NHS Test and Trace. Hopefully all other families will already be familiar with the reporting requirements but if not, please will you always register your results as follows:

- [Uffculme School – Report Home Test Results](#); and then also at...
- [NHS Test & Trace – Record a Covid 19 Test Result](#)

Note – when asked to enter details of the school, please enter “Uffculme School (EX15 3AG)”

Please do record your results in both places, even if it takes you a couple of extra minutes to do so.

Extra-Curricular Opportunities

As always we like to hit the ground running and there is already a lot going on. In the next few days we will be holding our Extra-Curricular Fair showcasing the many opportunities that are open to students at the school. The number of opportunities that is available is almost overwhelming, providing something for every student to take part in, no matter what their interests. This is such an important feature of the school and I do hope that your children will find at least one club or activity to join in with. Please do encourage them with this.

We know from experience that students not only get more out of school when they join in with the different things that are going on, but that many of these activities help to build important qualities such as independence and resilience as well as developing their social skills and widening their friendship circle.

Overseas Residential Trips

Sadly this year we will be unable to run the German Markets Trip in December or the Iceland Geography trip in April (2022). In the case of the German Markets trip there is still a lack of clarity as to whether the markets will be running this year and if so to what extent. And in the case of the Iceland trip there is still uncertainty over the insurance cover for the trip, and we are not willing to ask parents for money without a guarantee they will be repaid if it is cancelled. We have delayed making these decisions for as long as possible in the hope that circumstances might change, but we are now out of time and need to make a decision. Our priority now is to look for what other opportunities we might be able to offer to students and we hope to be able to announce these in the near future.

Turning to the Year 11 Ski Trip, the really good news is that at present we are still able to continue with this, and Mr Heard and the team responsible for organising this residential opportunity will continue to update you on preparations at each stage.

Key dates

Please do check the website for dates of events or letters you may have missed. Below are some of the key dates for this half term:

- Year 7 Tutor / Parents evening is on Wednesday 29th September (except for students in 7 Glanville, whose evening is on Thursday 30th) – a letter will be posted home about this in the next few days (information will also be on the school website).
- Our annual Uffculme Challenge Walk for students in Years 8 and 9 is taking place on Friday 24th September.
- Thursday October 7th (6.00pm to 8.00pm) is our Open Evening for pupils and carers in Years 5 and 6.
- Friday October 8th is a Staff Training Day

Please note that all our term dates and closure days (both for this academic year and for 2022/2023) are available on our website [Term dates | Uffculme School](#) should you need to check them.

If you have any questions about these or other events in the calendar, or if there are any issues with how your child has started or anything else you would like us to know, please get in touch with their Form Tutor or Head of Year.

Thank you once again for helping us to achieve the best for your child. The school has never been in a better place and we are really looking forward to seeing what records we can break this year.

Yours sincerely



Alan Blackburn
Headteacher