

17th December 2018

Dear Parent / Guardian

Re: Year 10 – End of term letter

We have finally reached the end of a long 15-week term and Year 10 have successfully started their GCSE courses. Whilst the transition to GCSE poses many challenges, I have been impressed with the determination and resilience demonstrated by our students. It has been wonderful to observe so many of them embracing the challenges new subjects have to offer as well as developing their depth of knowledge in areas they have studied before. When Year 10 come back in January the focus will be on continuing to progress in these areas as well as preparing for their PoR PPE taking place on Monday 14th January.

It has been a busy term with a number of activities taking place and I have been pleased to see so many members of the year group displaying enthusiasm and being good role models to the younger years. Back in September, Year 10 participated in the preparations for Harvest which involved decorating boxes and collecting produce for the elderly in the local community and Wokingham Food Bank. Year 10's generosity and spirit of kindness really shone through. Year 10's charitable endeavours continued with a superb event organised by Charlotte and 10S: Teachers Come Dancing! Here we saw staff being choreographed by Year 10 before competing in an exciting lunch time show which raised over £300 for Children in Need. Most recently, Year 10 form groups participated in the annual Christmas fair. It was wonderful to see so many Year 10's running stalls and displaying their leadership skills. Earlier this term, the whole of Year 10 took part in Enterprise Day where students learnt more about the world of business and bringing products and services to market. The Year 10 business students also attended a trip to Land Rover Jaguar.

Year 10's contribution to the sporting life of the Holt continues to be impressive especially in Football. Last Thursday, they played in the Year 10 and 11 six-a-side tournament where they actually met our home-grown Year 11 Holt team in the semi-finals! On paper the year 10s could have been considered underdogs purely based on experience, but that didn't stop them; they gave it their absolute all with the game 0-0 at full time and into penalties. Elisha saved some tricky penalties and the team won on sudden death. They just lost out 0-1 in the final to Piggott. But the excitement didn't end there as on the very next day, the team participated in the legendary Year 9 and 10 five-a-side tournament with ten teams from across the area competing. The Year 10s played outstandingly against strong competition and finished second. A big congratulations to the Year 10 football team: Elisha, Frankie, Abigail, Kirsten, Kate, Gemma and Lottie. And also in the Thursday games and U15 squad: Scarlett, Emilia, Saima, Lilly and Ella.

Back at school, we also had the hotly anticipated inter-house netball competition with all forms participating for vital house points before the Christmas standings are announced. In third place we had 10T and in second place, 10C. But taking the crown this time was 10W – well done to Weavers. There are still lots of house points to play for with the Christmas door competition results yet to be announced.



As the term draws to a close, I always look forward to presentation assembly where we recognise the progress, achievement and efforts of the year group. It was wonderful to see so many students receiving certificates and awards for their hard work and diligence. It was also fantastic to see so many talented performers. Yui, Isabel and Caitlin gave a beautiful rendition of John Legend's All of Me. Caitlin's acapella solo at the end was particularly moving. Elana, Gemma and Isabel also stole the show with a beautiful vocal of Ed Sheeran's Happier. And then to close, Freya and Lucy brought the festivities with a guitar performance of Your Song. I also want to say a big thank you to all of the students who prepared speeches; public speaking can be a little bit nerve-wracking but the quality of what Year 10 always deliver continues to impress me. It was a superb celebration of the talent in Year 10 and may this be set to continue as we enter 2019.

Musically Year 10 continue to impress and a special well done must go to Suzi for her piano recital at St. Mary's Church in Shinfield earlier this month. Alice also performed superbly at the Remembrance service with many guests commenting on her grace and maturity. Many Year 10 students also sang in the Christmas Concert at St. Paul's Church last Thursday. This included most of the GCSE Music class but a special mention goes to Alexine for an outstanding performance.

Recently an audit was undertaken as to how many Year 10 students are participating in extra-curricular activities in and out of school. It is encouraging to see so many Year 10 students embracing these opportunities to develop their character. In the world of today, employers want to see well-rounded individuals who have many strings to their bow as well as academic achievement. I would ask you to support us by encouraging your children to join in with what the Holt has to offer by joining a lunch time or after school club, running for form captain or being a student council representative. Many of our students do this already as well as competing outside of school too. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Lara and Lucy on their recent trampolining success at the Welsh Open Championships.

We all know that the winter is a notorious time for those dreaded coughs and colds, but it is essential that Year 10 are attending school as regularly as possible. For the vast majority of students, this is indeed the case. There is a direct correlation between attendance to lessons and subject achievement at GCSE. Students are allowed to bring in over the counter medication such as ibuprofen, paracetamol, feminax (for period pain) and sore throat lozenges. We ask for your support in this matter to ensure our students get as much out of their education as they can and that we are helping them to build up resilience for what they will face in the working-world.

My final point is in relation to parent communication to school. We welcome your feedback and comments but would ask that they are directed to the following email address Year10team@holt.wokingham.sch.uk to ensure that a member of the Year 10 team can get back to you as promptly as possible.

I wish you and your family a very Happy Christmas and a restful holiday – we look forward to welcoming the students back on Thursday 3rd January.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Gemma L. Priddy
Head of Year 10