

3rd April 2019

Dear Parent/Guardian

Re: Year 8 End of Spring term letter

Looking out of my office window, it is difficult not to admire the beautiful blossom on the trees, it is clear that spring is well and truly with us now. The spring term is always busy and with the shorter days can be very tiring as well. In spite of this, at this point in the term, I always enjoy reflecting on all that Year 8 have achieved.

We have had a significant amount of sporting success this term, for example, the Year 8 netball team were runners up in the district league, Year 8 were semi-finalists in the under 13 Berkshire cup for football, The Year 8/9 cross country team became cross country champions for Reading and District, Year 8 played in the under 13's Berkshire youth games in rugby and the Year 8 B team came 2nd in the local hockey festival. It is lovely to see so many students participating in all of these extra-curricular activities. It shows hard work and determination and develops important life skills which our girls will need in the future, notwithstanding the enormous benefits for mental health that regular exercise gives us.

Last week, we celebrated the achievements of our year group at our termly presentation assembly. This was a lovely occasion and the whole year were congratulated by Mrs Kennedy for their achievements and behaviour throughout. I particularly enjoyed the performances. Daisy did an inspirational talk about Autism Awareness day, Isobel and Lily played 'Over the Rainbow' on the piano and violin, Isabel played 'Lady Brittany's Ballad' beautifully on the piano and Tori sang for us. The performances were all outstanding; it takes great courage and determination to stand up in front of your peers to perform. The girls were a real credit to Year 8.

I was pleased to see so many parents attend our recent Key Stage 3 Parent Information evening. I spoke about the mindfulness programme that we run in Year 8. This is something we do as a registration activity once every two weeks and your daughter has been taught to use a variety of different mindfulness techniques. I have to say, these registrations are my favourite as it provides such a relaxing start to the school day! Mindfulness is something that you really have to practice though and there is no better time than when relaxing at home during the Easter holidays.

Attendance in year 8 is fantastic for the majority of the year group, at 96.5%. I am very grateful to parents for supporting us in ensuring that your daughters attend regularly and this good attendance really does make an important difference to their progress. I ask that you continue to encourage your daughter to come in to school unless she is really unwell. Often the distraction of school helps the girls to feel better and it is excellent preparation for adult life when they may not be able to take time off so easily. We do monitor any student whose attendance falls below 95% very carefully, often it is due to authorised sickness but we all need to work together to ensure where possible students come into school. Many girls have 100% attendance which is excellent and should be commended.

Please remember you are welcome to contact the year 8 team via email year8team@holt.wokingham.sch.uk or by phone if you have any concerns with your daughter's progress or well-being.

I wish you all a lovely Easter and look forward to seeing the girls on Tuesday 23rd April at 8:40am.

Yours sincerely



Mrs Thomas
Head of Year 8