

WH/RNM/DECLET

14 December 2010

Dear Parent/Carer

#### CHALLENGING WEATHER

While I always look to keep school open in bad weather, my concerns for the safety of our young people caused me to close early on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> December and remain closed on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> December. I apologise if this decision caused you difficulty. I am very grateful to the bus companies and their drivers who provided a full set of vehicles in less than an hour on the Wednesday.

We are also grateful to Mr Bringins and his Premises Team who worked tirelessly to keep the pathways in school both safe and clear. We were really well served by his team, and we are all very appreciative of the extra they did, and the spirit in which it was done.

In the unlikely event that I have to close school we would send out text messages to parents, put a note on both our website and the Education Leeds site, and we would put an answer phone message on our main switchboard. In any other circumstance please assume we are open.

#### SIXTH FORM CONSULTATION

It was a matter of regret that because of the snow we had to cancel the planned Sixth Form Consultation evening on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> December. If we have concerns about the progress your daughter or son is making, you will already have been contacted. We have now rescheduled a Sixth Form Consultation Evening for you on Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> March between 4.30 – 8.00 p.m. If you wish to raise a matter of concern with us that you have not had the opportunity to do, please contact Mr Rumsey on 01937 846612.

#### YEAR EIGHT RESIDENTIAL

We were disappointed that the Year 8 Residential to Beverley Park had to be cancelled. This was not so much due to the snow, but to the failure of the central heating boiler at the centre. It has now been repaired, and we have re-booked the event for the week commencing 10<sup>th</sup> January 2011, I look forward to hearing of its success.

#### YEAR SEVEN AT FAN WOOD

A highlight for many in Year 7 will have been the Fan Wood experience. Each trip was a great success and the young people engaged brilliantly. They supported and motivated each other really well through some challenging activities. They were great ambassadors for the school with the centre staff recognising the good manners and kindness being shown throughout the visits. I am grateful to Miss Horgan and her team for all they did to make this opportunity happen.

#### CURRICULUM CHANGES

We are continually looking for opportunities to improve our provision for our young people, and in particular our curriculum. As we have developed our curriculum, we find our outcomes have improved. For Year 9 we will hold a briefing for parents on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2011 at 7.00 p.m. about the choices available moving into Year 10.

We are also making some changes to further improve our provision for Year 8 going into Year 9. For Year 8 pupils there will be another evening on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2011 at 7.00 p.m. At this event we will explain the changes we are making and the choices that will be available for your daughter or son both in Year 9, and in Years 10 and 11. We will publish all the details in a booklet in January, and I very much hope to be able to meet you at one of these events.

## MEDICAL INFORMATION

We are committed to the proper care of your daughters and sons while they are in school, and it is for this reason we employ a School Nurse. It is really important that our records of any medical conditions are accurate. If you are concerned that we do not know all that we should could you please write, in confidence, to the appropriate Year Office who will ensure our school records are updated?

## UNIFORM

During the adverse weather we were content to relax our approach to uniform, particularly with footwear. We also had the Year 11 exams which meant that additional layers were needed to combat the plummeting temperature of the Sports Hall. In the new term, unless we face further challenging weather we will expect all our young people to be in full school uniform as described in the planner.

## SPORTS COLLEGE

We were pleased, last year, to secure funding to pay for Jenny Barber (an ex student) to act as an 'Artist in Residence' through the summer term. Jenny has cast a life size bronze sculpture of a sprinter which is to be mounted on the circular plinth at the front of school. This is a part of our celebrations recognising our 10 years as a Sports College. We are delighted that Baroness Campbell, who has been such a driving force behind the success of young people in sport, has agreed to officially unveil the statue in January.

The Tennis Centre is making great progress and is looking very impressive; despite the recent weather conditions the projected completion date has slipped only by five days.

## GOVERNORS

Mrs Polly Edwards retires this month from our Governing Body. Polly has been a Governor with us for the last ten years and at another Leeds secondary school for the twelve previous years. Twenty-two consecutive years of public service tells us much about Polly's character and values. She has been a huge advocate for our school, her loyalty and selfless commitment to us is admirable; we will really miss her.

## ANTI BULLYING WEEK

We are committed to our young people displaying the right attitudes to bullying and so we were keen to take part in National Anti Bullying week last month. Our aim of the week was to raise awareness of anti bullying and bullying issues. Six young people from Year 8 and 9 were chosen to be our Anti Bullying Ambassadors. They attended training with other young people from different schools, and worked closely with Miss Pugh, Mrs Hills and Mr Lynskey to raise awareness and create a debate in our school.

## TERM DATES

School will close at 12.30 on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> December for the end of term, with an early school bus service home. Young people entitled to a free school meal will be able to have their meal at break. We will re-open at the usual time on Tuesday, 4<sup>th</sup> January 2011.

The new term will start with a week of focus on the situation in Pakistan following the summer floods. There will be events in Year Teams and subjects to raise our awareness. Through the week foods from Pakistan will be amongst our lunchtime choices, and the week will end on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> January with a non uniform day, in return for a £1 donation, to be given to support the flood relief work being undertaken in Pakistan by Oxfam.

Thank you for your support through this term, we are always appreciative of your partnership, and I look forward to seeing many of you on our annual Review Day on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2011.

Lastly and most importantly can I wish you and your families every blessing for Christmas and the New Year.

Yours faithfully

CHRISTOPHER WALSH  
Headteacher