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ORCHARD
SCHOOL
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INSPIRE TODAY, EMPOWER FOR LIFE

Headteacher: Mrs Julia Hinchliffe MA (Hons), MA, NPQH

08 January 2021

Dear parents and carers

Thank you for managing the first week with your children remote learning. We have had an excellent start, and students have engaged very well overall. Thank you to parents who have sent so many positive messages in. It does make a difference when know what is going well for you and I can share these with staff.

We are receiving many lovely letters of thanks from the elderly residents at St Monica Trust villages as well. In December your wonderful children in Years 7, 8 and 9 sent over 450 letters to residents in these villages who may have felt lonely at Christmas time.

Remote Learning

We are monitoring our students' engagement carefully in their online learning. This is so we know who is attending each lesson, earning the 1s – House Points – and contacting those who may need more encouragement to get learning. Our teachers have really enjoyed delivering lessons to your children, and are very pleased with some very high-quality work which is being submitted by students. What a fantastic start!

We know that 91 – 95% of students are learning well at home. In Year 7 & 8 over 94% of students have been absolutely brilliant, attending lessons, writing into the chat function as part of the lesson, and submitting assignments. We know these numbers will be growing as more students borrow laptops. Thank you for your support with remote learning.

Laptops and Free School Meals

This week we have provided close to 150 laptops and over 300 food parcels to families. Thanks to parents for collecting these, and I hope these will also make a difference to you. We are awaiting government guidance on the Edenred Free School Meal vouchers, and hope that we will be able to start using these for Year 11 from 11th January (Year 11s only had a one-week food parcel as we had been expecting them back in a week earlier) and from 18th January for all other parents. We will be in touch again to let you know details.

Children of Critical Workers and Vulnerable children

We hope the spaces we have been able to provide for critical workers are making a difference to parents. We know our parents working in the NHS, particularly at our local Southmead Hospital, are under a lot of stress, and our thanks go out to you for everything you are doing to help with the pandemic. Your children on site have been engaging very well in their remote learning and we enjoy seeing them here.

With my best wishes for a good weekend.

Julia Hinchliffe, Headteacher

