



EASTERN HIGH

'YSGOL UWCHRADD Y DWYRAIN'

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Dear Parent/Carer

As we are fast approaching the move to the new building, I thought I would update you with latest developments concerning the move to the new school and some other developments across the school.

So far this year . . .

In September, we wanted the year to begin positively in preparation for the move and I have to say, we could not have asked for a better start to the year. Behaviour has been good and almost every student is turning up to school in full uniform. It really has lifted the school this year and developed a sense of pride in our students. Encouragingly we have received many positive comments from members of our community regarding the behaviour and appearance of students. Thank you for your support in this.

Prep time and Structure of the day

This year we changed the structure of our day to four longer lessons and the introduction of 'Prep Time'. The longer lessons have had a positive impact and has enhanced pupil progress in all lessons. In addition, I am pleased to report that the launch **Prep Time** has been a great success and in a recent survey of students the vast majority are in favour of these vital sessions. The school really is in total silence during these sessions and students are all actively involved in revision. You can now access the Prep Time sheets on our website (go to 'Parent Information' – 'Essential Information' – 'Prep'). Here you will see the prep sheets for each year group and more importantly, the timetable the students are following each week.

Students still have English and Maths homework, but they should also continue revising the topic they have studied that day at home. We have now begun to introduce testing either in the following lesson or during Learning Family Time, to test the students in the areas they have studied each day.

Attendance Prize

Attendance is a key contributor to achievement in school and we celebrate this in school in many ways. This year we are offering a prize draw for any child above 95% attendance this term. The draw offers an opportunity to win a family festive hamper to the value of £200. We also have an end of year family hamper draw and an individual student prize (to the value of £250) at the end of the summer term, again this is eligible for students with 95% attendance or above.

Time Credit School

I am pleased to say we have recently become a Time Credit school. More details will be available on our web site shortly regarding this. In short, attendance and/or involvement in specified school events and activities by parents and students will earn you Time Credits. These Time Credits can be collected and exchanged for various items such as cinema tickets.

New Building – Transport

First Bus has put a proposal forward for the 64 and 65 bus routes to be altered so that they provide a route to and from Llanrumney, stopping close to the new school. The Traffic Commissioner should agree this shortly. As soon as it is, we will post full details on our website. In addition to this bus services 44 and 45 will continue to run from St. Mellons, to and from the new school site.

I am also hoping that improvements will be made to the walkway, which goes between our current building and St Iltyds next door. There are ongoing discussions with the Council regarding this issue and again all updates will be on our website.

Moving arrangements and Key Stage 4 January Exams.

As you can imagine the move is very complex and I ask you to be patient with us while we undergo this process. To allow us to move and set up the new school, as mentioned at the beginning of the year, our last day of term will be **Tuesday 19th December** and our first day back will be **Wednesday 10th January**. If you have any childcare problems, please let us know and we will attempt to accommodate as far as possible.

There are some exceptions to the closures due to exams and Year 11 coursework, when we will expect selected students to attend school. Please refer to the schedule at the end of this letter.

Standards in the new building

We have worked hard (students, parents and staff) to make significant improvements in standards across all aspects of the school. We are certainly pleased with the progress and I feel confident we will look after the £26million gift the community has been given. The school needs to be a beacon of excellence in the community and a facility we are all proud of.

I am sure we will achieve this, but we must keep improving and developing as a school. You can help us by ensuring your child is dressed in full school uniform each day. We provide (clean) uniform on a daily basis for those who do not have it on a particular day. We have made an allowance with regards to Year 11 wearing blazers, if they have genuinely grown out of it. If this is the case, a black jumper is acceptable.

There really no excuse why a student in the other Year groups should not have a blazer. The impact of nearly everyone in full uniform on behaviour, pride, confidence and aspirations has been tremendous this year. Please support us further when moving into the new building. It only takes one student not wearing uniform to begin a trend of non-compliance.

There will be no need for a student to go outside between lesson changeovers therefore all students will need to leave outside coats in lockers and wear their blazers in the building. We will also have designated eating areas in the school where all food should be consumed

Organisation for closure days

The following students will be expected in school at the times listed below:

Wednesday 20th December:

- **All of Year 9** from: 9.00am – 11am (**English Literature** exam preparation)
- **All of Year 11** from: 9.00am -2.30pm

Thursday 21st December:

- **All of Year 11** 9.00am -12.10pm

Monday 8th January

- **Year 10 & 11** - 10.30am – 12.30pm (**Health & Social Care** students sitting the resit exam on 9th January)
- **Year 11** - 1.00pm – 3.00pm – **ICT** exam preparation
- **Year 9 & Mr Knowles' Year 11 English group** – 1.00pm – 3.00pm – **English Literature** exam preparation

Tuesday 9th January

- **Year 9 and Mr Knowles' Year 11 English group** – 8.40am – 10.50am **English Literature Exam**
- **Year 10 & 11** – 8.40am – 10.50am **Health & Social Care resit exam**
- **Year 10 ICT exam prep**

Please Note:

I am aware at the beginning of the year I mentioned that only Year 11s would be in during the closure days. However, this was before I had access to the exam dates. We understand if some Year 9 or 10 parents have arranged holidays during the times we have asked students to come in. If this is the case, let us know and we will discuss alternatives, but please be mindful the exams are public exams and so dates **cannot be changed**.

The new school opens for all on Wednesday 10th January. We will give details of how we intend to induct the students into the new building closer to the time.

Other important dates for the remainder of this term:

- Monday 27th November: School closed for staff training
- Thursday 30th November: Year 11 Parents evening
- Monday 4th - Friday 8th December: Year 11 mock exams
- Tuesday 19th December: Last day of Term (finish at normal time 3.00pm)

Kind Regards



Armando Di-finizio
Head teacher

