

RIPLEY ST THOMAS

CHURCH OF ENGLAND ACADEMY

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4 December 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

We come to the end of another very busy week in school – the weeks seem to whizz by so quickly!

COVID update

As you know, Lancaster is now in Tier 3 – Very High alert. I attach to this letter a helpful poster which explains the restrictions. As we approach the Christmas period and to help us avoid the need for staff and students to have to isolate over Christmas due to positive cases, could I remind parents of two important messages:

1. Please do follow the guidelines outside school to avoid mixing with others and possibly spreading the virus in school.
2. Do not send your child in to school if they have symptoms or if someone in your household has symptoms.

We will still need to continue with our 'track and trace' up to the Christmas holiday and during the first couple of days of the holiday. We ask that you continue to use the positivetest@ripley.lancs.sch.uk email to keep us informed.

DFE announcement regarding exams – Year 11 and Year 13

As you will be aware there have been some announcements to changes to the Year 11 and Year 13 examinations to provide some support and reassurance to pupils in these year groups who will no doubt be anxious about the impact of COVID on their exams. We are awaiting some further details in the coming weeks and I will write to parents in the new year once we know more. For now, we know the following:

- Exams have been delayed by 3 weeks to free up extra teaching time.
- More generous grading than usual, in line with national outcomes from 2020, so students this year are not disadvantaged.
- Students receiving advance notice of some topic areas covered in GCSE, AS and A levels to focus revision.
- Exam aids, for example formula sheets, provided in some exams giving students more confidence and reducing the amount of information they need to memorise.
- Additional exams to give students a second chance to sit a paper if the main exams or assessments are missed due to illness or self-isolation.

Ripley St Thomas Charities week

Please find below a message from Mr Quarry regarding our Charities Week.

Believe.....

As we approach the final two weeks of a challenging term, we look forward to some exciting activities taking place throughout school in support of several local charities.



Mental Elf 2020



From Monday, Year 8 and 9 will be contributing towards the Lancashire Mind Mental Elf challenge, which aims to increase awareness around mental health whilst covering the 2004 miles, running from Lancashire to Lapland.



Year 10 and 11 will continue the excellent work started last year by taking part in this year's seasonal challenge, the Reindeer Rush! for St John's Hospice.

The challenges are centred on wellbeing and the aim is for everyone taking part to come away with an improved wellbeing through exercise, getting outside, connecting with others, learning something new, giving back and having lots of fun!

Within their PE lessons, pupils in Year 8-11 will run the one-mile route to raise money for their chosen year group charity. All pupils will need trainers to complete the charity run, which will take place when pupils have their PE lesson on the last lesson of the school day. In addition to their PE kit, pupils are encouraged to bring something festive to run in if they have it (e.g. Santa suit, Santa hat, elf ears, tinsel, Christmas socks, t-shirt etc.)

Pupils are asked to contribute £1 towards the charity run – this will be collected on the last day of term which is our 'Mufti Day'. The £1 will also cover pupils wearing their own clothes on Mufti Day. Donations should be given to progress tutors who will collect it in a sealed bag.



Year 7 will be completing a reverse advent challenge for the Olive Branch along with random acts of kindness within our school community.

As a member of the Bay Learning Trust, we support the Lancashire Mind Mental Elf Initiative this year. We know this is a big issue currently. If you would like to get involved and join in with the Lancashire to Lapland Challenge, you can find information here: [Mental Elf 2020 | Lancashire Mind](#) .

Mufti / Christmas Jumper Day

As mentioned above, Friday 18 December will be a Mufti / Christmas Jumper Day – pupils in the main school and the sixth form are allowed to wear their own clothes and we encourage them to get festive in addition and to wear Christmas jumpers / Christmas Ties / Christmas Socks / Christmas Hats. There will be some spot-prizes for those who have made the most

effort! We suggest a donation of £1 (or 50p if there is a sibling in school) towards our Christmas charities as stated above.

Pre-loved items

Thank you to those of you who have donated pre-loved coats, uniform and Christmas jumpers. If you would like support with these items, please contact Michael, our Chaplain via Parentline.

And finally...

We reflected on God's light shining into the darkness during our worship in school this week (John 1:5), remembering God's care for our mental health and wellbeing. I pray that you may know God's light in your life this advent season and that you will be filled with hope and peace.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "C Walmsley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'C' and a long, sweeping tail on the 'y'.

Mrs C Walmsley
Principal