

# RIPLEY ST THOMAS

CHURCH OF ENGLAND ACADEMY

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Dear Parents and Carers

We have had a busy couple of weeks since returning from half term with Sixth Form Open Evening, Year 13 Parents' Evening, Year 11 mocks beginning, anti-bullying week and our many different co-curricular clubs. All in addition to the usual teaching and learning that goes on! It was a particular highlight last weekend for me to join the Remembrance Day parade with our cadets in Lancaster City Centre and the service up at the Priory. The cadets all looked incredibly smart and were a real credit to the CCF team and to the school. Thank you to Chris Hale and his team Barney McAlister, Helen McAlister and Steph Atkinson for all the work they do to provide these opportunities for our pupils.

If you don't already, please do follow us on our various social media platforms (Twitter, Instagram and Facebook) to see the whole range of things which are going on.

## **COVID and Lateral Flow Testing**

Whilst COVID numbers in Lancaster are apparently quite high, I am pleased to report that numbers of COVID cases are very low across the school. Please continue to test twice a week (Sunday and Wednesday) and let us know of any positive results via [positivetest@ripley.lancs.sch.uk](mailto:positivetest@ripley.lancs.sch.uk). Results should be recorded with the NHS online.

Thank you for keeping your child at home if they are experiencing any of the COVID symptoms. Please also book a PCR test as a precaution if they are unwell.

## **Winter vomiting bugs**

Please be aware that it's that time of year again! If your child is unwell with sickness or diarrhoea, they must remain home until at least 48 hours from the latest episode. Please do not send them in earlier as they may spread this infection in school.

## **Overdue library books**

This week we have started an amnesty on overdue library books. There are currently nearly 1500 overdue books across the school, some of which go back years. The total stock missing has a replacement value in excess of £12,000 and we would very much like to get these books back so that they can be used by other pupils. Please do encourage your child to have a look in their bedroom for overdue books and get them to bring them in on Monday. It doesn't matter how long they have had the books - we will be delighted to get them back.

## **Attendance**

Mr Wilson has been talking to pupils in assemblies about the importance of good attendance and the direct link between attendance and making great progress. To ensure our pupils are successful, we set an attendance target of at least 97% - this equates to five school days of absence in one academic year. We are mindful that this is obviously affected at the moment by COVID and winter bugs (as mentioned above!) when it is essential that pupils do stay off.

*Believe.....*

We encourage you to make dental and medical appointments outside of school time as far as possible, but if your child is unavoidably unable to be in school then please phone our office number on 01524 64496 (option 1). If we do not receive a reason for an absence as soon as possible on the morning, this has to be marked as unauthorised and the school will get in touch with you on the same school day.

Top tutor group attendance totals for last week are below – well done to these forms!

Year 7: 7Smith **99.1%**  
Year 8: 8Mansfield **99.07%**  
Year 9: 9Benfold **96.88%**  
Year 10: 10Vedick - **96.76%**  
Year 11: 11Hamersley **96.7%**

### **National anti-bullying week**

It was great to see so many pupils and staff sporting their odd socks today to mark the end of anti-bullying week. This is a year-round focus of course, but it was good to take time to highlight this important topic this week. This year's theme was 'one kind word' - something pupils were asked to reflect on during their worship with Mrs Abell.

"Encourage one another and build one another up" 1 Thessalonians 5:1

### **The Olive Branch**

Our local foodbank is currently running very low on the following items: rice, cereal and tinned meat (including meat balls). If you are able to, please consider donating to the Olive Branch. We are happy to collect items in school and deliver them on your behalf – please bring any items to the chaplaincy.

We are going to look at doing a more regular collection for this charity in the new year.

Yours sincerely,



Mrs C Walmsley  
Principal