



19th July 2023

Dear Parent/Carer,

End of Term Letter

We are now approaching the final week of the academic year and I wanted to take this opportunity to write to you before the start of the summer holiday.

Thank You

I would like to start by thanking you as parents/carers for your support during the past year. It has certainly been a busy and highly successful one for us in school. Over the past three years, we have seen our student numbers rise rapidly; we have grown from 495 students in 2019 to 605 at the start of the next academic year. This year we hope to report even better academic results in the summer from our Year 11 cohort and the possibility of improving on our record results in 2022. We are fully staffed for September, with specialists in every area of school, which is certainly contrary to the picture of secondary schools nationally. This term has also seen a wealth of opportunities for our students. There has been a very successful Year 7 Camp, many enjoyable activities for Year 8 and 9 students as part of Enrichment Week, whilst our newly reintroduced Work Experience for Year 10 was a real success. Alongside these activities, we have seen 12-hour music 'jams', an upcoming trip to Tanzania and a number of Duke of Edinburgh trips. It has been a year full of exciting opportunities and real progress as a school.

I met with the Regional Director for education in the South-West this week, who commented positively on our impressive progress as a school in recent years and the strong position we find ourselves in. This is undoubtedly because of the collaboration between students, parents/carers, school staff and Trustees. Thank you for your commitment to ensuring that we focus on our core vision as a Trust; namely that we provide your children with the best education we can, whilst offering opportunities to help them to develop into the polite, respectful young adults of the future. Please rest assured that this commitment to the children of Shepton Mallet and the surrounding villages will not waver and we will ensure that we continue to prioritise a generation of students impacted upon by the challenges of a pandemic, a cost of living crisis and an uncertain global picture.

End of Term

On Friday (21st July), we will finish for the end of term at 12.30pm, when buses will collect those students who normally travel into school in this manner. Students will be returning home with their latest progress reports, which indicate their progress during recent months.

September 2023

As outlined in previous letters, term will start in September for Year 7 and 11 students only on Tuesday 5th September at 8.40am. Wednesday 6th September will see all students in school, with Year 8, 9 and 10 students joining the other two year groups.

I appreciate that the summer break can sometimes result in young people becoming anxious about returning to school in September or for whom circumstances change. I am always happy to be contacted by email at guy.swallow@whitstoneschool.org during the summer break regarding your child, should you have a question or query. I will endeavour to return your email before we return for the September start. This is particularly true for our new Year 7 cohort, who despite a very successful transition process, will undoubtedly have an element of uncertainty about moving to secondary school. I am happy to offer whatever support and reassurance I can by email during the summer if required.

I'd like to take this opportunity to wish you and your family a safe and relaxing summer, one where I am sure we all hope to see at least a little sunshine!

Yours faithfully

Guy Swallow
Headteacher