



HENLEY BANK HIGH SCHOOL

Friday 23rd November 2018

Dear Parents and Carers,

I'm reluctant to start this letter with an opener of weather related focus but alas I can't. What another turn in the weather this week has seen with ice and a teasing of snow. We ensured that our heating was on a little earlier to provide an even warmer welcome for our students this week with an added bonus of a hot chocolate with marshmallows at lunchtime today.

Our year 11 students are half way through their Pre-Public Examinations and so far are performing extremely positively. Their examination etiquette is unrivalled so far with students entering the arena silently with their game faces on and ready for action. It has been extremely pleasing to see our Year 11 students so committed to success. Discussions between students about their examination preparation are a regular occurrence throughout the day in the library, canteen, ICT suites and between lessons. So many students are investing their own time during lunchtimes and break to give themselves the best opportunity of success in these exams that it will provide an incredibly effective springboard to success in the final examinations that commence in May 2019. Watching students share their revision flash cards and Cornell notes gives us great confidence in their absorption and application of advice delivered by Mr Foran and Mr Phelps at our recent Year 11 Parent Information Evening that focussed on exam readiness. It is proving true that prior preparation prevents pupils performing poorly. It is certainly proving to be the key factor in the reduction of the inevitable anxiety associated with examinations. I feel it is extremely important to remind ourselves from time to time how it feels to be in their shoes, so for the first time in quite literally years, I stepped into the examination hall with them to complete the first two of our three Mathematics papers. The scratching of pens on paper and the occasional cough which sounds huge against the unrivalled silence, the signature of an exam hall, contributed to an incredible experience. For me, it brought home the importance of effective examination time management a factor that I will feedback to my staff next week. It was humbling to be in the arena with our students and exciting to observe them all writing to the very last second, using all of the time to contribute to their success. I look forward to receiving my results with them on the results evening that we are planning for students and parents as part of our next Year 11 Parent Information Evening. I do not want to wish our students good luck for the second week of exams as their hard work and commitment has removed the necessity for luck. Instead I wish them success and hope that they enjoy the process and use it to their advantage in preparation for their finals.

Our Year 7 rugby team tied up their boot laces and stepped onto the pitch to take part in the rugby tournament held at Churchdown School this week. The opposition proved tough throughout the tournament and our students returned home with their muddled heads held high as once again their sporting attitudes reigned supreme. Well done to all players involved and thank you Mr Powell for giving our students another opportunity to showcase their skills to the community. I'm looking forward to coming and watching your next game.

Our commitment to increasing collaboration with local primary schools continued this week with Mr Powell visiting Moat Primary School to hold a rugby masterclass session with their students and Mrs Benfield, our Primary Liaison Lead, visiting Shurdington and Meadowside Primary Schools to launch our new online safety program. The latter will see a group of our key stage 3 students working with children in years 5 and 6, helping them to develop healthy and safe `relationships` with social media and internet communications. We are delighted to have achieved so many links with such brilliant primary schools that surround us in every direction.

I look forward to another weekend of nail biting rugby and to the start of another successful week at Henley Bank High School on Monday.

Until then, have a lovely weekend.

Kind regards,