



7th April 2022

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Dear Parents/Guardians

It is hard to believe that the school year continues to pass so quickly. The last term has, as they all seem to, flown by. Yet, we can also reflect on so much that has happened across school over the spring term. Our school Newsletter, which will be with you soon, celebrates so many of the wonderful achievements and opportunities that our students have had during this term.

With the topic of opportunity in mind, we do wish to identify that following two years that have seen great restriction to our school visits and so much of our enrichment, we are working hard to see a return of these opportunities. In doing so we are also mindful of the financial impact of this on families and so we are trying to structure the right balance between opportunity and not putting unreasonable pressure on families. Details about our enrichment activities for next term will be advised to you when we return after Easter. We are also seeking to provide all Key Stage 3 students additional enrichment activities in Science and again, more details will follow soon.

I would like to take this opportunity to share some important messages with you:

Covid Testing & Reporting

We move into further uncertainty in many ways with Covid. We recognise the virus is still very prevalent and it has had a significant impact on our staffing over the last half term. We hope this reduces as we return after Easter. In terms of the new Covid guidance, please be aware that this is currently available via this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/people-with-symptoms-of-a-respiratory-infection-including-covid-19>

It is important you refer to this guidance as it advises when and how long under 18s should stay at home if they have symptoms of Covid or have tested positive for Covid. Whilst we do want our students in school as much as possible, please be aware of this guidance when deciding if your child is fit to attend school.

We no longer require you to complete a Google Form if your child is absent due to Covid, but you must still report their absence.

Absence Reporting

We are updating our absence reporting and a Schoolcomms email will be sent out, before the students return after Easter, with the full information.

School Meals – Cost Increases

Due to the current increases we are facing from our suppliers, which are between 10-15% and likely to continue to rise, unfortunately we are required to increase school meal prices by 5% from week commencing 25/4/2022.

The **Free School Meal (FSM) allowance** will, therefore, be increased from £2.30 to £2.45 per day in order to support our FSM families.



Lunch Accounts – ParentPay

Please may we ask you to check your child's lunch account balance and for any negative balances to be cleared immediately. We would also ask that you also keep their account in credit; you can set up alerts in ParentPay to notify you if your child's lunch account goes below a certain balance (to do this access the 'profile' page and 'alert settings' – it is free to set up an alert email). Parents and students can also check the lunch account balance by clicking the 'catering' icon in Edulink.

If you have any queries about this, please do not hesitate to contact the school's Finance Department – accounts@arden.solihull.sch.uk

Water Bottles

We would like to remind the students that they can bring a bottle of water/refillable bottle with them and they can refill these at the drinking water facilities in school.

Student Bags/Property & Lockers

Could you **please ensure that your child/children take home all of their bags, PE kits, property including items in lockers** at the end of this week. We will gather any **left property for you to come and view between 3.30pm – 5pm on Friday 8th April**; any items left on site after this time will be disposed of, with any saleable items passed on to the Marie Curie Charity shop in Knowle.

Contacting School

During the Easter holiday, the school office emails will be monitored Monday-Friday from 9am to 12pm only (excluding the Bank Holidays). Emails will be sent on to the applicable member of staff, but please do not expect a reply until week commencing 25th April when school re-opens.

We wish you all a very happy Easter and look forward to the return of our students for what is always a very busy, enjoyable summer term.

Kind regards



Mr Warwood
Associate Headteacher