

26th November 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

I hope you are well and have had a good week so far.

When I wrote to you last, I mentioned our upcoming Diwali event that was taking place at our Lower School site last Wednesday. We had a wonderful turnout from our whole school community and lots of people in attendance. We were blessed with some fabulous Indian dancing from our pupils, some delicious Indian street food as well as a truly spectacular professional fireworks display. If you were unable to make it this year, I am sure you may have been able to see some of the fireworks through your window! This was a special event for us as it was our School's first ever Upper and Lower joint event. Many students and parents have said that they had wished they had come so please do make sure that you join us next year. We hope that throughout the year ahead, we will be able to have more events when we can all be together and celebrate.

Last Thursday was our annual 6th Form Open Evening where prospective students from Preston Manor, as well as many external students joined us to talk about possible 6th Form choices and courses. It was great to have so many visitors to our Upper School and we were pleased to be able to do the event in person. Our own 6th formers were our tour guides for the evening and the feedback we received was exceptional. Last year we had over 500 applications for our 150 places in year 12, so please make sure that your son/daughter's application is received on time.

We are now entering the last three weeks of the Autumn Term and very soon the Christmas holiday will be upon us. Our Year 13 students are currently completing their UCAS exams under formal examination arrangements and this will be followed by our Year 11 who will begin their Post-16 examinations under exam conditions. These exams are extremely important for a number of reasons but there are two in particular I would like to highlight. Firstly, it is an opportunity for our students to demonstrate to their teachers where they are in their learning and identify any gaps in their knowledge that there may be. This will allow us to begin informed intervention strategies before the formal examination series begins in May. It is also important to note that these exams may be needed in case of illness, or COVID related issues, if any exams are missed in the summer season, as they will form part of the evidence base in awarding grades. We are all hoping that schools remain open and functioning and that normal school life can continue.

You may be aware of reports in the media that students in various parts of the UK are posting derogatory comments and videos about teachers on TikTok. It is an issue which is being raised with TikTok by the Department for Education. I must remind parents/carers that while you are the adults who are paying for the contracts/top-ups, you are responsible for ensuring that your child is using their mobile phone and posting on social media in a way that does not undermine the integrity of any individual known to them or not. Please ensure that you are checking your child's mobile phone regularly to ensure that their phone is being used in a safe and appropriate way. Photographs or videos should never be posted of anyone without their expressed direct permission and neither should anyone be posting anything negative or demeaning to others. Your support in ensuring that online safety is maintained is invaluable to us all.

A really positive part of our school over the last week or so has been the full return to trips and activities providing opportunities that go beyond the classroom. Last week we had our 6th Form Business trip to Wembley stadium and a 6th Form trip to Brunel University. This week has seen



our DIVAs also visit Brunel University, some of our Year 10 visited the University and our 10 & 11 Drama students visited the Troubador Theatre. In the next few weeks we will see our Year 11 visit The Old Vic Theatre and some of our Year 13 visit the Kiln Theatre! After the past two years, I am sure you will agree that providing such experiences is invaluable - making school memorable and raising aspirations.

It is hard to believe that when I write to you next week we will already be in December. Wishing you all a restful weekend.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Russell Denial", written in a cursive style.

RUSSELL DENIAL
Executive Headteacher