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Headteacher: Mr E Rodriguez MA BSc (Hons)

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17<sup>th</sup> December 2020

Dear Parents

I hope this closing message of the term finds you and your families well.

It has been quite a term. Welcoming students back in September, after such a prolonged absence from school, was such a joy for all of us. To see them back in their classrooms, engaging with their learning and interacting with their teachers and friends in person once again has been such a boost for us all.

Clearly, many things have been different this term. Students and staff have had to work in new ways and manage changes implemented at short notice. One-way systems, new timetables, face-coverings and rigorous hygiene routines have certainly impacted the school but the students seem to have taken all of this in their strides. I am so impressed by the positive manner in which the school community has responded to these additional demands and constraints.

For many of us, we have been sustained by the memories of how things once were and so how things will be again. The same cannot be said for our new year 7 students for whom this term represents all they have known of Oathall. Despite this, they have settled so well into the school and we all, very much look forward to their experience at the school becoming increasingly enriched and more 'Oathall-like' in the very near future.

Oathall, of course, is all about learning and a reminder of this can be found in our latest teaching and learning bulletin which you can find [here](#).

Regrettably, we have had a, albeit small, number of positive cases of Covid-19 identified in the school during the later part of the term. All available guidance was followed but as a consequence certain students were required to isolate themselves. Notwithstanding this, overall attendance at the school has been very strong this term and I would like to thank you for all your support in this respect.

The term closes with the positive news of the first vaccines being administered and with it the hope for a much brighter new year for us all. The recent reduction to the duration of an isolation period from 14 to 10 days will inevitably reduce the potential disruption of further cases should they occur. Significantly, we were advised earlier this week, that a mass testing

programme for staff and students would be made available to schools from January. We await the full details of this and I will be able to advise further in due course.

**You may have seen [in the news](#) this afternoon that a staggered return in January for English secondary schools has been announced. As yet, I have no further information from the DfE on this and will advise you further as soon as I am able.**

As a school, we are required to identify close contacts of any student who develops symptoms up to 48 hours since being in school and subsequently tests positive. Since our last day is Thursday 17, this means we would need to be notified of any student who develops symptoms on Friday 18th or Saturday 19th December and subsequently receives a positive test result.

If these circumstances are applicable to you, please contact the school using the [office@oathall.org](mailto:office@oathall.org) address which will be monitored for these purposes up until the 23rd December; thank you.

Thank you for all that you have done to support the school and your children's learning this term.

On behalf of the staff and governors of Oathall, can I wish you and your families the best possible Christmas and a very happy 2021.

Edward Rodriguez

Headteacher