



Friday 5th November 2021

Dear parents/carers,

As the clocks go back and the nights draw in, we hope you enjoy the first parent/carer update of half term two. This is always a great half term, with lots of enrichment beyond the classroom through remembrance, charity events, as well as the run-up to Christmas.

Quick Read

- This week we have held our remembrance assemblies for the whole school, and next week we will observe the two minutes' silence. Students in Y10 have also created the fantastic poppy display on the West Green in Stokesley with help from the community.
- Our first social enrichment trip has taken place to Hollywood Bowl and we are looking forward to a Christmas shopping trip soon. The next two trips for spring term have been announced too: read on to find out more!
- Our Designated Safeguarding Lead has created a short video to explain how we safeguard children and staff at Stokesley School; this is part of a range of useful information available on our website.
- The school will not be hosting any more vaccinations on site, to our knowledge, but don't forget you can book one for your child yourself via the NHS website.
- Tassomai is a great revision tool for Y11 students in both science and English. There is more information in this letter about how it works, and how you can find out more.
- Calling all Y11 students: the application form for our Sixth Form is now live on the school website. The deadline to apply is 13th December 2021.
- We have a thriving nearly new uniform shop run by our PTA to support low-income families and to help us all be more eco-friendly. There is more information, including price lists and how to get in touch or donate items below.
- Attendance is being affected by covid-19 and other viruses. We are also frustrated at the government policy to record covid-19 absence as illness; like other schools, we have tried and failed to affect a change in this national policy.
- Has your child achieved something outside of school that you think we should know about? Please let us know so that we can congratulate them too.
- Our student leaders are planning fun activities for Children in Need which takes place on 19th November.
- There are some important dates for your diary at the end of this letter.

Longer Read

Remembrance and the community poppy display

This week's assemblies, delivered by me, have been focusing on remembrance. We have considered what remembrance is, why we have remembrance, and the different ways in which we remember both in Britain and in different cultures across the world. I have also shown students my father-in-law's prison of war diary which has helped us reflect on the





importance of passing memories down through generations. The interest the students have shown both during and after the assemblies has been testament to them all. Next week, on the 11th, we will have a live broadcast into all classrooms before playing the Last Post and observing the two minutes' silence.

The Y10 Bridge students have also worked hard to prepare and install the display of knitted poppies on the West Green in Stokesley, adjacent to the Cenotaph. The group has learnt many new skills including time management and teamwork. Thanks go to members of Stokesley Fire Brigade for donating their time and equipment to tie the display to the trees. Many grateful thanks also go to the generous staff and members of the community who saw our plea for knitted poppies. The additional poppies have enabled the students to add extra sheets to enhance the display and make it even more impressive than last year. We are still in need of more knitted poppies for next year and will take them at any time!



Social Enrichment Trip

Students and staff enjoyed the first social enrichment trip before the half term break at Hollywood Bowl. It was great to see the students socialising and having fun together and they were a credit to the school. We have 100 students going Christmas shopping to the Metrocentre in December and the next two trips have just been announced for next term which are theatre trips: Hairspray and School of Rock!





Safeguarding

Safeguarding our children and families at Stokesley School will always be a priority for us and we are aware of the pressures families are under and the challenges some may face from time to time. Mrs Myers, who is our Designated Safeguarding Lead, works closely with school staff, families, students and local partner agencies to ensure the right support is in place if and when any safeguarding issues arise.

Please [click here](#) to visit the safeguarding section of the website where you can scroll down and watch a presentation about safeguarding at Stokesley School which we hope you will find useful. Alongside this, on our website, there is some other useful information including agencies that can support you and our online safety newsletters that are sent out to parents/carers each month.

As always, please get in touch with school if you have any questions or you feel we can support you in any way.

Vaccinations

The school hosted a second day of vaccinations for children on Monday. Once again, tight resources for the Childhood Immunisation Team and the late arrival of the vaccine on site meant that not all children who had provided consent received their vaccination. This is simply a reminder that there will be no more vaccinations carried out through school, but you can book your own via the NHS website www.nhs.uk and by clicking 'Find out about covid-19 vaccination'.

Tassomai for Y11 students

Nearly all of our Y11 pupils have now paid for and have access to Tassomai, an online revision resource for science and English.

The system acts as an online tutor, helping pupils to consolidate their understanding of each topic for GCSE sciences and English. Tassomai organises students' independent revision and supports them in learning the facts they need for the exam. It analyses performance and tailors its revision programme to the individual so they can fill any gaps in their knowledge and practise for the examination papers.

We have used this programme very successfully in science for the past six years and we feel that it will be of great importance this year after all the disruption to the start of the GCSE courses. The system works best when used regularly and so we are encouraging pupils to aim to complete at least 5 out of 7 'Daily Goals' per week, each taking around 15 minutes. There will be leader boards produced each week and ambition points awarded accordingly.





Tassomai have also produced a GCSE Survival Guide for parents drawing on their expertise as a leading edtech platform. Please find a link to the handbook here: <https://www.tassomai.com/gcse-survival-guide>.

Sixth form applications

Following our successful sixth form open evening last month, online applications to our sixth form are now open on our school website. The page you need is the 'apply now' section of the sixth form tab, which can be accessed by following this link <https://www.stokesleyschool.org/sixth-form/apply-now/>. Students should complete the online form indicating which subjects they wish to study in order of preference (1 - 3, with reserves if needed). We are also asking for the students' latest predicted grades, this will be on their latest report which is stuck in their planners. The deadline for applications is 13th December; interviews will take place after February half term following the Y11 exam weeks. If you have any questions please email Senior Assistant Headteacher, Mr McGreal via r.mcgreal@stokesleyschool.org.

Uniform Sale

Do you know that the PTA runs a nearly new uniform shop which raises valuable funds for our school and offers parents/carers the chance to purchase items at bargain prices?

Standard Uniform

Blazers £5

Trousers & Skirts £3 or pack of 2 for £5

Jumpers £3 or pack of 2 for £5

Ties £1

Old style PE Kit (excluding year 7)

Long sleeve top £3

PE t-shirts £2

Shorts/long socks £1

We also have a small supply of shoes (some new), football boots and some great winter coats.

You can put in an order request via the PTA group on facebook or instagram, or alternatively you can email your request to our Education Welfare Officer, Miss Poole, at j.poole@stokesleyschool.org. We always welcome good quality donated items, just drop them into reception via your child, or in person.





Attendance

The first half term was a challenging one in terms of attendance: we have experienced an increase in absence and this has largely been due to students developing covid-19. We are hopeful that, as with the normal winter viruses, we are now past the spike.

We have sent a number of letters out to parents and carers this week reminding them of the link between attendance and achievement. Wherever we can, the school will support students and their families in improving attendance. Please get in touch with your child's tutor or Head of Year in the first instance if you need our assistance.

Unfortunately, the government changed absence recording procedures in the summer term. When students are absent with covid, they are recorded as an 'I' on our SIMS system, as they would be for any other illness. This means that covid absence is recorded as that, an absence. We think this is totally unfair and Mr Burns, Assistant Headteacher, wrote a letter that was passed to the Department of Education in the summer term, expressing our concerns and disappointment at the decision. Many other establishments raised concerns about this change, unfortunately it hasn't created any alteration in government policy.

On Tuesday Mrs Bailey, our Attendance Officer, wrote to the parents of 457 students to congratulate them on achieving 100% attendance during half term 1, a significant achievement in the face of a continuing covid situation and the usual autumn viruses that have affected many of us.

Good news stories

We love to hear about the successes and achievements of our students outside of school. If your child has done something worth celebrating, and we're sure many have, please let us know via admin@stokesleyschool.org for the attention of Mrs Weschenfelder.

Student Leadership and Children in Need 2021

Our Head Girl and Head Boy alongside Mrs Darbyshire will address all students via assembly next week. They will be informing them about the activities which have been arranged by our student leaders to raise money for Children in Need. The events will take place on the 19th November. There will be a bake sale, a whole school quiz, the 'Walk a Mile in my Shoes' for Y7 during tutor time and the ability to purchase a range of merchandise which the student leaders are making to raise funds including yellow ruffles, earrings, clay figures and other fun artifacts. On the day, students in Y7-11 will be allowed to wear a yellow or spotty item for the day in addition to full school uniform. This could be official Pudsey merchandise or any yellow or spotty item such as a headband, hat, socks, sunglasses, hair bobble or gloves. Students in our Sixth Form will be allowed to wear any yellow or spotty t-shirt or top. We understand that the pandemic has led to financial challenges for some of our families. We welcome any size donation on the day but there is no obligation to give





anything. As parents/carers, you may also wish to donate. You will receive notification via parent pay if you would like to do so on Thursday 18th November. The student leaders are working exceptionally hard to create a day that can be enjoyed but raise much needed funds for a worthwhile cause. Thank you in advance for your support.

Dates for your diary

Monday 8th - Friday 19th November:	Y11 exams
Thursday 11th November:	Y13 Parents' Evening (Virtual)
Tuesday 23rd November:	Y7 Parents' Evening (Virtual)
Friday 26th November:	PD Day (no students in school)

Yours faithfully,

Mrs H. L. Millett,
Headteacher

