



S Owen
Head of Lower School
01691 626511
Email: sharon.owen@ellesmere.com

14th January 2022

Dear Parent,

A new term faces us, along with new challenges, but we are hopefully refreshed and ready! The children have returned with great spirit and appear to have enjoyed many wonderful things with their respective families. Teaching staff enjoyed the break too and have returned recharged and ready to move things onward.

The weather was beautiful mid-week. The crisp air, frost and wonderful skies created a lovely vista from the College. We are lucky to be in such a stunning part of the world. Not surprisingly, as with each winter phase, the ground is heavy under foot in places and pretty muddy. With this in mind and respecting the floors and the people who have to clean them, we have asked the children to change their footwear at breaktimes. Please would families ensure that each child has a showerproof, warm coat along with hat and gloves where necessary. We do try to get the children outside whenever possible to expend energy but also to get lots of fresh air.

It was nice to see a studious array of holiday work that many children completed. Many of the KS2 children were keen to talk about the books that they have been reading.

All KS3 pupils are following the national directive by wearing masks indoors at the moment. They are much better at remembering to bring them from home. It is also wise to provide your child with their own supply of pocket tissues and possibly a hand sanitiser, if they are particularly sensitive to the alcohol-based ones in use communally in College. KS3 pupils, where permission is given, should be LFT testing twice per week. The result can be given to tutors who will report the result internally to Dr Chatterjee and the Sister Team.

Sister Eiry asked me to mention that there will be an **HPV vaccination clinic on Friday 21st January** for Year 8 pupils. An in-touch letter with the consent form will come directly to you at home. We will require the consent forms **returned by Tuesday 18th January**. Should parents want more information regarding the HPV (Human papillomavirus) vaccine please use the attached NHS link:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/hpv-human-papillomavirus-vaccine/>

Ellesmere College, Ellesmere, Shropshire SY12 9AB

Tel: 01691 622321 Fax: 01691 623286

www.ellesmere.com

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Lunchtime activities have recommenced and pupils are singing, playing chess and sports and joining in craft activities. The play rehearsals for Year 8 pupils are underway and pupils are busy and active again. Mrs Rogers is continuing to extend pupils with regular challenges to enrich their educational experiences and Reverend Gratton has continued to provide spiritual experiences and Chapel services.

There are a wide range of experiences underway during Wednesday John Muir afternoon for KS3 pupils.

The sport focus has changed for the Lent term. Girls have netball and will require trainers, games kit and full tracksuits. KS2 boys are playing rugby and will need a gum shield plus warm clothing and boots. The KS3 boys are playing football and will need shin pads plus the usual tracksuit, etc. Please also note that a hat is required in swimming if hair is long.

Mr Atherton has started the Chess Championships too. Throughout this term, KS3 pupils will play in the knockout rounds to get to the grand final and eventually, the Grand Master for Lower School. This is usually fiercely contested. On a more casual note, chess club carries on for those who wish to learn how to play and improve.

I hope that the weather stays good so that the football and netball fixtures will go ahead this week end too.

Lower School tutors will be contacting home at some stage during this first half of term and are the first point of contact for families.

Please also remember that the Lower School Secretary can be contacted on 01691 626511 or by email at lowerschoolsecretary@ellesmere.com. We will happily try to answer any query that you may have.

Have a good weekend.

Yours sincerely