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Dear Parent,

Once again, we have come to the last newsletter for this half of the Lent term. I am sure that all pupils and families will be ready for a break to recharge batteries. We have had a number of pupils with colds, coughs and stomach bugs over the past few weeks and this has caused some strain for them. I know that the week's break will do them good. Hopefully, it will provide a natural break between everyone and thus have a marked effect on reduction of infections.

With infections in mind, it will be worth checking your child's hair over the holiday. Head lice are a common problem from time to time with junior aged children.

Assessment week appeared to go smoothly. Tutors have spoken with their groups to ensure that pupils know that it 'is all about trying ones very best and preparing well'. We also like to keep things in perspective too. If certain areas do not go as well as wished, it is what a person 'does about it' that really counts. Tutors will be continuing to guide children towards the various academic clinics and homework group opportunities available through the week.

The third period grade will be published soon for this term.

It was good to see that a number of pupils achieved ABRSM music gradings this term. Bella New and Oscar Hewitt are the recent additions and should be proud of their distinction levels.

Please could families ensure that each pupil has a personal reading book in their school bag. This should be a different book from any being studied in class. We encourage personal reading as much as possible, and should a child finish prep it is a good time to focus on reading for enjoyment.

The weather has been cold and wet over the past couple of weeks. We remind pupils to bring a warm coat, hat and gloves into School for playtime and moving between lessons. There are still a number of children looking cold at breaktime. It is also wise to have a spare pair of old trainers in a locker to try to keep the wet and mud to a minimum as we work through the busy week. On a similar note, it is important that all pupils have warm kit for PE and Games lessons. The school tracksuit is essential and skin base layers may be worn too! All of these items help pupils to get the most out of their learning. The swimmers and team players particularly need to be warm as they travel to and from their training/events, etc. Please name it all and we can get it back to children if it strays.

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Next week the newly formed Newspaper Club will be releasing the first edition of their newspaper "Everywhere Ellesmere". Newspapers will be sold on Thursday and Friday before we break up for half term. The cost is 50p which will be collected and sent to The Hope House Tŷ Gobaith Children's Hospices charity.

It is worth a note to say that Year 6 Parents' Meetings are next week and Year 8 Parents' Meetings are on the horizon after half term. The booking system will be opened next week for Year 8 parents to book meeting slots for either the in-person event or online discussion. As previously explained in last week's newsletter, there is an information session in the Arts Centre prior to the 'in-person meeting' on Tuesday 28th February. It is a chance for parents to hear from the new team for Middle School and Mrs Pritt-Roberts will explain a little on how the curriculum moves forward. Parents then move on to speak to subject teachers in the Lower School building, more details will follow via InTouch.

It is worth noting that all communications requesting pupil leave of absence should be directed to Mr Wignall. He has to consider permission for absence from School as legislation has changed considerably and College have to note detailed reasons for absence.

Please contact the Lower School secretaries, Mrs Lowe or Mrs Arrowsmith, with any concerns regarding arrangements as we move towards half term. School transport departs as normal at the end of this half term.

Have a good half term when it arrives.

Yours sincerely,