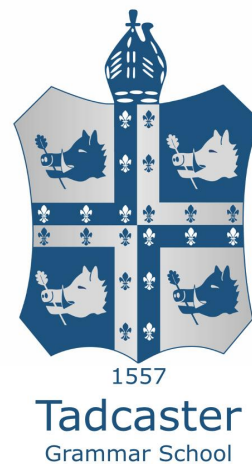


Friday 16th April 2021



Dear parents, carers (and students)

I hope you managed to get a break over the Easter period, amongst the erratic weather. We've had a fantastic start to the summer term. Our superb students continue to take responsibility for their own actions regarding our COVID-19 safe way of working and deserve recognition. Thank you for your efforts ensuring your children are in line with school expectations for uniform as requested in my update before the break. Still some work to do with a minority of students, but uniform standards are definitely improving.

Building works continue apace in school. We have more re-roofing works ongoing, redecoration and a refurbishment of our all-weather pitch. The work to replace all lighting in school with more sustainable LED units is nearing completion. This project has been funded for us externally which is excellent. It is really heartening to see our students taking a collective responsibility for maintaining the physical fabric of the school and grounds; willful damage is exceptionally rare and, when it does happen, costs are pursued with parents. We have also invested significantly in our IT infrastructure, largely as a response to developing our remote curriculum offer. As more year groups join the Chromebook scheme, we now have the broadband and network capacity to ensure reliability at the point of need.

I hope your children have reported favourably on the new options for school food we have introduced this week. This is partly in response to a new allergen labelling requirement (commonly known as Natasha's Law) which will apply to categories of food called 'prepacked for direct sale' from 1st October 2021. This is food which is packaged for consumption at the same place it is offered to consumers. Some examples of such items include sandwiches, cold pasta pots, and salad boxes. The UK Government has ruled that these foods will need to have ingredient and allergen information provided on the label from 1st October 2021. I have included a flyer at the end of this update.

I'm sure you have been following the developing *Everyone's Invited* storyline in the media. I'd like to signpost you to our initial MAT response to this issue [HERE](#) including the practical guide for parents and carers whose children are using social media [HERE](#)

Coming soon, I would like to invite you to share your views on the following:

- A minor amendment to the school day timings looking ahead to September 2021
- How we conduct parents' evenings going forward (see Mr Dunphy's article on page 2)

The following is a collection of updates from various staff which I am pleased to share with you.

Kind regards,

Andrew Parkinson
Headteacher



Headteacher: Mr A Parkinson B.Sc (Hons) M.Ed M.Sc
Toulston, Tadcaster, North Yorkshire. LS24 9NB
(01937) 833466 | www.tgs.starmat.uk

Parents' Evenings

Despite some national teething problems which were inevitable when introducing new systems and technologies, the online video Parents' Evenings have proven to be exceptionally effective and popular with both parents and staff. The remaining evenings, which are for Year 10 and Year 7 students, will both be held virtually, and each over two nights in order to maximise opportunities for parents to make appointments. We are also extending the 'window' so that appointments for some teachers can be made up until 7.30pm, rather than the previous end time of 7pm. Hopefully this will further help ensure that you speak to the teaching staff you would like to see. Please ensure that you do not miss the deadline for making appointments.

Coming soon, we will be really interested in gathering your views about whether we continue with 'virtual' parents' evening in 2021/22

Mr M Dunphy

Assistant Headteacher (m.dunphy@tgs.starmat.uk)

Tools For Student Wellbeing - Parent/Carer Workshop

As mentioned in a recent update, our educational psychologist Dr Clare Stephens will be running an on-line parent workshop regarding student wellbeing and mental health. Her outline agenda will include the following.

- To consider issues which may lead to a lower sense of wellbeing in young people, including:
Fear of failure;
Life lacking a sense of purpose;
Having limited choices;
The challenges of developing quality friendships;
Poor sleep.
- The development of the teenage brain;
- Using the 5 Ways to Wellbeing as a universal intervention strategy;
- Introducing Emotion Coaching to normalize and validate feelings and develop emotional regulation skills;
- Highlighting other sources of support within our school community.

The on-line workshop will take place next week on the evening of Tuesday 20th April 2021 at 6pm. This first evening is for parents/carers of students in years 10 -13. Parents can access the session through our G Meet platform. Please would you sign up [HERE](#) if you wish to attend. A personal invitation to the G Meet will be sent on the morning of Tuesday 20th April 2021.

For those parents and carers of children in years 7-9, we plan to run a similar evening later in the summer term.

Ms M Carroll

Assistant Headteacher (m.carroll@tgs.starmat.uk)

COVID-19 Testing

You may be aware of the recent government announcement that all adults in England are entitled to access rapid lateral flow tests. These can be accessed through various channels. The two easiest ways to get packs of tests for your home is either by applying online to have them delivered for free to your door or by attending a participating pharmacy who will provide you with 2 packs of 7 tests. If you would like to order online for free a delivery service, then please follow [this link](#). If you would like to go to a participating pharmacy in order to collect your packs, then please follow [this link](#).

Please note that we will continue to provide lateral flow tests to students to take home. However these tests are allocated to the students only and not to the family household. This is a stock issue in which the Department of Health only provides kits for students and not families. Therefore, if you have run out early as a result of using the kits amongst the family, then you will need to access more using one of the two options outlined above as we cannot give out additional kits. Further kits will be provided to students next week, in line with our allocation schedule.

Please also be aware that the lateral flow tests are for regular testing to stop the spread of asymptomatic cases. If you or any of your family household are displaying COVID-19 symptoms, then you are required to take a PCR test to confirm whether or not you have coronavirus. For further information on this guidance and to book a PCR test, please follow [this link](#). In addition, if you are asymptomatic and take a lateral flow test which returns a positive result, you must book a PCR test to confirm the lateral flow test result. The previous link can be used to book this test.

Finally, please may I take this opportunity to thank all our families for their support and patience during the last term as we all got to grips with carrying out testing and then distributing testing kits.

Mr R Vernon
Deputy Headteacher (r.vernon@tgs.starmat.uk)

Year 11 & 13 Centre Based Assessment

Following the letter sent to Year 11 & 13 students and parents on 1st April 2021, we will be writing out again with more information about the arrangements for centre based assessment in the near future, including 'stand-down' details for Year 11.

If you missed the JCQ guidance for parents and students we shared with you on the 1st April 2021, [here](#) it is again.

Mr A Sykes
Senior Assistant Headteacher (a.sykes@tgs.starmat.uk)

School Environment Update



The Environment Student Leaders in Year 12 have been working hard to implement their ideas regarding planting the beds behind the green house at the back of the P block with flowers to attract bees and other pollinating insects. They are also keen to use the greenhouse for growing plants that they would like to distribute around school, once the classrooms are open 'as normal'. They would then use the rest of the plants as a fundraising initiative to keep the greenhouse well stocked and increase monies for the environmental projects within school.



We are clearing the beds and greenhouse over a couple of Saturday mornings from the beginning of May, but in the meantime we are putting out a request for resources.

We are in need of plant pots, compost, any spare seeds, seedlings, any old (but usable) gardening equipment, and any 'baby' house plants that we can bring on please. Please contact:

Mrs R Miller-Noble
Student Leadership - Calcaria House Champion
(r.miller-noble@tgs.starmat.uk)

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