

The Highway  
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CH5 3DN

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Yr Highway  
Penarlâg  
Sir y Fflint  
CH5 3DN

December 2023

Dear Parent/Carer



## Christmas Concert

As we draw closer to the festive period, I would like to invite parents, pupils and friends of the school to join us on the occasion of our Christmas Concert, which will be held at St. Deiniol's Church, Hawarden, on **Monday, 11 December**, commencing at **6.00 p.m.** We are most grateful to the Reverend Canon Andrea Jones for agreeing to host this important occasion in our school calendar. Seating is limited and tickets are now available, free of charge, from the School Office.

## School closures

At this time of the year it is prudent to remind parents/carers about the procedures that we follow in the event of poor weather conditions which might result in the school closing. In this event I will communicate the situation to parents as early as I possibly can. **Please assume therefore, that unless you hear positive information to the contrary, the school will be open.**

The main medium of communication for a school closure is the Flintshire website (<http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/schoolclosures>). We will also endeavour to put this information on the school website and send a text message/email. You may also find it helpful to sign up for email alerts on the Flintshire website.

In the event of deteriorating conditions during the course of the school day pupils may be instructed to return home. However, students' safety is of paramount importance and, **should such a situation arise, students will not be granted permission to leave the school site before the end of the school day unless you have notified the school that you, or another responsible person, are available to receive them.** I ask that, in the event that snow is forecast, you should also remind your child of your instructions as to where they should go in the event that the school closes during the course of the school day.

Please contact the school should you require further clarification of the school's response to such circumstances, or in the event that these arrangements present potential difficulties for you.

## End and start of term

School finishes at the normal time on Thursday, 21 December 2023 and the spring term for pupils will commence on Monday, 8 January 2024.

## Use of Social Media

I write to ask for your support in ensuring that our students do not use social media to undermine, threaten or abuse each other or post images/videos of themselves or each other that could have lasting consequences. Whilst there is much to commend social media when used properly, it is all too quick for people to make thoughtless, insensitive and offensive comments. Recently we have seen a rise in the number of incidents outside of school when using social media which have subsequently impacted upon relationships and the community within school. We have also found that staff are dealing with incidents which are often outside of our control and very difficult to rectify after the event.

The best approach we feel is a comprehensive one with on-going education in online safety and responsible use. We will be conducting further assemblies in school which reinforce such messages, but it would also be useful if you would engage in a

conversation with your child about their own use of social media and the Internet and how they should ensure that use of these social media platforms is responsible and does not cause offence to others. You may find it helpful to access online information resources to provide further information on children's use of social media – the NSPCC have produced very useful advice which can be accessed here: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>

Parents/carers must also be acutely aware and vigilant of who their child may be communicating with online. There has been an increasing trend of abuse where children and young people are tricked into sharing inappropriate content. Mr. MacDonald, our Designated Safeguarding Person, shared a disturbing statistic recently—that there was an estimated 250,000 instances of indecent images/videos of children circulated in the UK in 2022 alone.

It is also worth noting that all common social media platforms indicate a minimum age use of 13 years.

I also wanted to take this opportunity to remind parents of our own approach in relation to the possession of mobile phones in school, which are not permitted under any circumstances. Our mobile phone policy is available to view [here](#).

### **Year 11, 12 and 13 Careers Fair**

During REACH lessons on the 18th January, we will be hosting a careers fair for those students in examination year groups. A wide variety of local and national employers such as Airbus and the NHS will be present to talk to pupils in Years 11-13 about the range of employment opportunities available to them, post-16 and post-18. Pupils in Year 11 will also have employers visiting their tutor groups in the next few weeks to discuss how to write and enhance their CVs.

### **Year 10 Work Experience**

A gentle reminder has been issued to those Year 10 pupils yet to organise their work experience placements for them to do so as soon as possible. All of the details required have previously been distributed to pupils and copies sent to parents/carers. Getting the placement booked early will make finding an employer willing to participate much easier. Please contact the school should you need any further support with this.

Yours sincerely



Mr. S. Budgen  
Headteacher