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Dear Parents and Carers

By now you will all be aware that the Cabinet Office has made the decision to delay Step 4 of the Government COVID-19 road map. I am sure, like me, you are disappointed by this announcement. We find ourselves in a context where sadly, cases are now rising significantly. Over the last week or so, many of the scientific advisors have been warning of the exponential growth of the virus and the fact that the link between hospitalisation and death, although weakened, had not been broken. This point was reinforced by the Prime Minister on Monday evening.

There is clearly significant concern over the spread of the Delta variant, particularly amongst the younger adults, who largely have not been vaccinated. In addition, it must be remembered that the vast majority of school children also remain in the unprotected group. The reality of this situation was evident today as we have had a suspected case in Year 10. All students in close contact have been informed and the necessary action taken. This brings into focus the importance of all students taking their LFT and uploading the results by 7.00pm every Wednesday and Sunday to Test Register.

Much of our planning for the latter part of this term had been based on the assumption that Step 4 would go ahead as planned on 21st June. We now must reconsider many of the activities we have organised for this week and post 21st June; some of these will be cancelled, others postponed and some will be able to go ahead in an adapted format.

This morning we were informed by the Marriott Hotel that they will not be able to host our Year 11 Prom. It is with great regret that this event now has to be cancelled. Similarly, the Year 13 event at the Brookfield Hotel also will be cancelled. We will write out to Year 11 and Year 13 parents with further information by separate letter.

The decision has also been made to cancel the Year 12 Taster Days due to occur from 16-18th June. In the current context, with rising rates of infection, we considered it too great a risk to have Year 11 plus some external students circulating with Year 12 as this breaks the bubbles on a large scale. Further, we have had little control over Year 11 since their departure and very few Year 11 students have continued with a regular return of their LFT results. A COVID case within Year 12 now could decimate the forthcoming Year 12 exams within a year group that need the formal examination experience. Year 11 to Year 12 transition material will go online and we will review the induction arrangements for the start of the Autumn term, so students do not miss out.

The Harry Potter Evening and Fundraising Friday will also be cancelled; both these activities mix year groups together to a lesser or greater extent. The changes proposed for Step 4 would have allowed some flexibility to manage these events; that is now not the case. We still intend to support our chosen charity for Fundraising Friday and more information about the arrangements for this and other events will be sent out shortly.

Thank you for your patience and understanding as we now respond to Monday's announcement.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Matthew Quinn', with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Mr M Quinn
Headteacher