



## JULY 2021 UPDATE FOR PARENTS AND CARERS – YEAR 11

It seems sensible to include Year 11 parents in the round of summer newsletters, even though some students will not be returning to Oxford Spires next year. I thank the parents of the many students who are planning to join Year 12 and hope that the following information is useful. Please do not hesitate to email me if you have questions about entry to Sixth Form or Year 12 more generally.

Whatever your son or daughter plans to do next year, we wish you all a very good and healthy summer, and wish them every success!

### Farewells

We are sorry to say goodbye at the end of this term to Miss Marianne Blake, who has been a hugely supportive Principal for students and staff for the last four years. And what a four years that has been! Facing unprecedented challenges during those years, culminating in 18 months of pandemic and lockdown, we are grateful for her calm and positive approach to all she has had to deal with. Under her Principalship, students have continued to thrive academically and to develop personally, and we thank her for all the hard work she has put in to ensure that this has happened, despite all the world had to throw at her! We all wish her every success in her next headship. We also send warmest good wishes to the following staff as they move on to new roles in September: Miss A Boyd (English), Mrs M Coelho-Wilson (maths), Mrs S Downes (Counsellor), Mr P Gill (science) Mr S Masterson (Vice Principal/PE) Mr M Rugna (languages) and Ms L Smith (RE). Finally, we wish Ms C Atkinson a long and happy retirement and thank her for her years of dedicated service to our community.

### A message from Mr Hebblethwaite, our incoming Principal

I am delighted to be joining the excellent team at OSA in September. Clearly it has been a very difficult period in education, but I am hugely optimistic that the new academic year and beyond will be very successful. Alongside the continuous drive to improve the quality of learning for all students, our main focus at OSA when we return will be re-establishing routines and high expectations. I look forward to building strong relationships with parents and carers as we continue our mission to ensure that OSA delivers a first-class education for your daughter/son. I will write to you again early in the new term, and I wish you and your family a safe and happy summer holiday.

### GCSE Results and Enrolment into Sixth Form

Students will receive their results in the Sixth Form Common Room from 9.00am on Thursday 12 August. Sixth Form enrolment for those students who plan to remain with us next year will take place after that, with students requested to come to the Reuben Common Room at the following times:

Bannister	10:00-11:00am
Earhart	11:00-12:00 noon
Seacole	12:00-1:00pm
Tolkien	1:00-2:00pm

After 2:00pm, students currently studying at other schools will enrol.



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**Parents of new Year 12 students will be asked to come into school for a short meeting, along with their son or daughter, at some point on Friday 3 September.** Students who enrol on 12 August will make an appointment at that time. This meeting covers practicalities for Sixth Form students and sets expectations for the year ahead.

Students will only be able to join Year 12 once this meeting has taken place.

### Asymptomatic Testing

As pupils will potentially mix with lots of other people during the summer holidays, all secondary school pupils are being offered 2 on-site lateral flow device tests for their return in the autumn term.

**We will be asking all students to come onsite on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2021 for their 1<sup>st</sup> test.**

Please see the Covid testing schedule enclosed:

### Promoting Healthy Lifestyles

Promoting healthy lifestyles is given a high priority at Oxford Spires Academy. From Year 7 we teach our students the skills and knowledge needed to make good decisions about their physical and mental health. One important aspect of our Personal, Social, and Health Education programme is an emphasis on the dangers of substance abuse. Students learn about the harmful effects of the misuse of alcohol and drugs. We also make students aware of the consequences of criminal convictions for possession and use of drugs and antisocial behaviour caused by excessive alcohol consumption. Before the start of a new academic year, it is timely to remind students and their parents of one important aspect of our behaviour policy. If students choose to bring drugs or alcohol onto the school site they will face the most serious consequences, in most cases permanent exclusion is the likely outcome. Please be assured such events are rare but students need to understand the consequences if they choose to make a foolish decision in this regard.

### Good News!

After a pause in many of our usual extra-curricular events due to lockdown, OSA has had a very successful final term! We were delighted to see Martha (Year 10) reach the national final of the English Speaking Union's Performing Shakespeare competition, and come joint third out of the final 16 speakers. Judges commented on her talent in her recreation of the character of Kate in *Henry IV, Part 1*. As well as national competitions in speaking, we were also very pleased to see our teams at both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 win their heats of the Anthem Trust competition, Speak Up, on Friday 2 July. Congratulations to Merca (Speaker), Rose (Chair), Erik (Vote of Thanks) at Key Stage 3, and Ayesha (Speaker), Dora (Chair) and Emily (Questioner) at Key Stage 4. Thank you too to our excellent Sixth Form debaters, Daisy and Buster who argued articulately in their round.

### Commitment to enrichment

As the recent good news section shows, Oxford Spires continues with its commitment to enriching its students to build their wider skills and knowledge. Despite the difficulties of lockdown, we have provided



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opportunities (often online last year) and we have a very full programme of House events, extra-curricular clubs, and super curricular learning planned for the year ahead. Whether students are interested in maths or public speaking, acting or sport, music or chess, there will be something to suit everyone! Sixth Form students will once again have the chance to lead younger school clubs and competitions next year if COVID 'bubbles' are discontinued.

A new initiative this next year will involve a group of students from all years, led by Sixth Form, working with academics and theatre practitioners to create their own production of The Winter's Tale in the summer, and we already have plans for several year groups to work again with the Ashmolean and the Bodleian.

We really look forward to offering our usual in-person supercurricular events across Oxford for Sixth Formers, so far as safety allows, in the new academic year.

### Key Dates

September 2021	
Thurs 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Asymptomatic testing all students (1 <sup>st</sup> test)
Fri 3 <sup>rd</sup>	All Year 12 students and their parents have short meetings with Sixth Form staff.
Mon 6 <sup>th</sup>	Asymptomatic testing all students (2 <sup>nd</sup> test). All Year 12 students due into school for 8.45am for an initial tutor session.
October 2021	
Thurs 14 <sup>th</sup>	Open Evening
Fri 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Last day of term 1

### Structure of the day 2021-22 – Sixth Form students to arrive no later than 8.45am to register in lesson 1 or the Common Room.

Monday - Thursday		Friday	
8:35-8:45	(Tutor for lower school)	8:35-8:45	(Tutor for lower school)
8:45-9:45	Lesson 1	8:45-9:45	Lesson 1
9:45-10:45	Lesson 2	9:45-10:45	Lesson 2
10:45-11:05	Break	10:45-11:05	Break
11:05-12:05	Lesson 3	11:05-12:05	Lesson 3
12:05-13:05	Lesson 4	12:05-13:05	Lesson 4
13:05-13:40	Lunch	13:05-13:40	Lunch
13:40-14:10	Pastoral/tutor/assembly	13:40-13:45	Transition
14:10-15:10	Lesson 5	13:45-14:45	Lesson 5
15:10-16:10	Lesson 6		

We would like to take this opportunity to wish you a happy and relaxing summer, and we look forward to welcoming all students back in September.