



SBy/esk  
20<sup>th</sup> December 2016

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope that now that the term is over you are able to focus on the season and enjoy some relaxation with your daughters. It has been a busy term, with some wonderful highlights; for me the Christmas season really begins with the **Carol service** which this year was quite stunning. We had more students than ever involved in the event and Mrs Randall, Mrs Ritchie and the music department provided an evening to remember. For the first time, this year, we videoed the Carol service and this should be available shortly on our website for you to enjoy. Our choir also performed at the Christmas Tree festival at the beginning of the month.



**The Magill Building** is well and truly under way with the three storeys now in place and Hammonds, the Building Contractors, working right up to the Christmas break to ensure that they keep on schedule. I haven't braved it in a hard hat on to the top floor but Mr Day, our site manager has and he reports that the work is certainly looking impressive. Over the last couple of months, we have all been distracted by the sight of a huge crane moving the steel into place for the frame of the building and now we can really see everything taking shape. (It's a source of great satisfaction that when I looked back at my Christmas letter of 2015, I expressed the sincere hope that we would be successful with our bid. We were and here it is, on target for opening for September 2017!)

Also in process is **Magna Learning Partnership**, the Multi Academy Trust (MAT) comprising St Edmund's, The Trafalgar School and Wyvern College. You will have received a letter in the last couple of weeks regarding the consultation and I would be delighted to chat informally to anyone about our plans. We are inevitably excited about the opportunities that our new partnership will bring though, just as was the case when St Edmund's became an academy, you won't notice anything outwardly different about St Edmund's when the MAT opens on April 1<sup>st</sup>. It will still be business as usual!

Rumours abound that St Edmund's is to have a new skirt as part of its uniform! We would indeed like to change the school skirt as it is an item with which girls and parents have been unhappy for some time. We are concerned about the overall quality of the skirt, as well as the ease with which girls can roll them up to create a look which is less about school and more about fashion. We have been doing some research and I have shown many of the girls a **panelled skirt in fabric that appropriately is called the St Edmund's check** (see below). This is a much better quality skirt (but of course is more expensive, retailing at around £22.50). However, from what parents tell me, a better quality skirt that would last for two years or more would improve the current situation whereby the cheaper skirts split, look tatty and have to be replaced more frequently.



Overall, student voice has been positive. If we do introduce a new skirt for September 2017 we would intend to make it compulsory only for years 7-9 initially, meaning that current years 9 and 10 would have the choice of the old or the new skirt. We will continue to canvas opinion in the new year and I would be very grateful for your views.

### **The new term ahead ....**

I would like to ask for your support on a number of matters as we look ahead to the new year and the term ahead.

**Early arrivals in School** – please ensure that your daughter does not arrive in school before 0745. This is important, as before that time there may not be sufficient staff on site to ensure your daughter's safety in an emergency.

**Mobile phones** - most students respect the mobile phone rule and we have few problems with students misusing their phones. However, we will be stepping up the vigilance over lunch and break periods when we are aware that some girls are surreptitiously using their phones.

**Bus fares and passes** – please remind your daughter that, when getting on a school bus, she must either pay the correct fare or show a valid bus pass. Unfortunately, some students are, on a very regular basis, claiming not to have any money or a bus pass, and relying on the fact that bus drivers may not leave children or vulnerable people at the side of the road. In the new year Salisbury Reds will be conducting regular spot checks and will be asking their drivers not to allow students to travel unless a valid pass has been shown or correct payment has been made.

**Please do not enter or park on the school site** at peak times (i.e. to drop your daughter off in the morning or pick her up in the afternoon). The number of vehicles trying to negotiate a small site is dangerous and it is much safer for you to drop your daughter off a short distance away and allow her to walk from there into school. Don't forget the option of dropping your daughter at the London Road park and ride site, from where she can walk to school very easily, and you can avoid traffic congestion, especially now that the roadworks have been completed.

**Finally** - Christmas for most is a happy time with family and friends; for some, however, I know that it is a time when memories are particularly poignant. **I would like to send you all my best wishes for a peaceful Christmas, with time to relax and spend time with your loved ones.**

Yours sincerely

**Sarah Busby  
Headteacher**