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**ELLIS  
GUILFORD  
SCHOOL**  
*Creative  
Education  
Trust*

Wednesday, 16<sup>th</sup> December 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

As we now approach the end of term, I write to provide you with further updates about the school and the successes and achievements of our pupils.

Firstly, I am immensely proud that throughout the first term, we have not had any external cover teachers in our school. I know that this is not the case in schools, many locally, and its testament to the staff at EGS who, despite the challenges of COVID-19, have rallied together to ensure the quality of teaching has remained consistent.

I also know that pupils and parents have valued this. As the new Principal, I have been intent on making sure one of our key aims has been to maintain and sustain consistent teaching, using only staff employed by EGS.

Safeguarding remains our most important priority. To this end, we have delivered assemblies to our pupils about being safe in the school and we make sure all our staff have regular training. We present a safeguarding report to the governors each term and we have also been involved in a 4-week review of Safeguarding. More robust processes and procedures are in place to support our pupils. Pupils' mental health continues to be our most pressing concern, where we estimate 123 pupils continue to be anxious following lockdown. The appointment of a school counsellor is now benefiting pupils. We will continue to prioritise this key area next term.

Year 10 and 11 have now completed their PPEs (Pre-Public Examinations). I want to congratulate them on their excellent attitude and focus during this period. We will be sharing Y11 results in a mock results day. This will take place on Wednesday, 6<sup>th</sup> January, Period 5. Once pupils receive their results and have time to 'digest' them, they will be allowed to leave school slightly earlier, at approximately 2:45pm. Your child can, of course, remain in school until the end of the school day. As a reminder to Year 11 parents, there is a Parents' Evening on Thursday, 7<sup>th</sup> January which is virtual. Appointments are currently being made and the school is contacting every parent to support you in this process. Parents/Carers will receive a formal report by the end of January 2021. In order to support the achievement of Year 11 pupils we have made the decision that from January, pupil's will no longer be taking part in Core PE. Instead the time will be used to focus on study skills, and additional time in English, Maths and



Science. Therefore, Year 11 pupil's will no longer need to come in their PE kit from January. I hope you support this decision.

Year 7 to 9 have been doing MCQs (Multiple Choice Questions) in all their subjects last week. These have taken place in lessons. Teachers have marked these, recognised any gaps in learning and are re-teaching this week in order to fill gaps in learning. Certainly, after lockdown, this is an important part of our teaching and learning philosophy. After Christmas, the Trust have created assessments for all pupils in Years 7 to 9. All pupils in these years will complete these tests in the second week of January. The results of which will be shared with you as a report on your child's score by February half term.

Again, pupils have responded well to the MCQs which are designed to test your child's knowledge in each subject are learned throughout the term.

Many pupils are doing well in the school and being suitably rewarded. Our 'achievement' points and reward scheme is resulting in pupils receiving a bronze badge for 300 points. Well over 250 pupils have achieved this so far and they have also been rewarded with a 'pizza and film' treat.

Next term we hope many more will reach this threshold of 300 points, whilst lots of pupils will be rewarded with a silver badge for 600 points!

We have also introduced 'student of the lesson' rewards and as well as 'student of the week' awards. During this final week, all pupils in the school will take part in celebration events.

Pupils this week have thoroughly enjoyed being recognised for their efforts. I congratulate them and challenge them to continue achieving well next term.

Our new Parent Partner, Ms Poppy Curtis, is now making sure that parents receive feedback following phone calls to the school. We analyse these each week and where the response has not resolved the initial call, they are prioritised and escalated. Ms Curtis is also calling parents to make sure they are satisfied with the school's response.

In January, I am delighted to announce the appointments of 4 experienced, new teaching staff to EGS. They will work in Science and Humanities. I will provide you with pen portraits of our new staff in January. We have strengthened 2 key areas in the school, so that we continue to improve teaching and learning in these priority subjects.

We continue to uphold high expectations throughout the school. Pupils are now becoming used to these expectations and we are seeing better behaviours



throughout the school. Of course, where pupils make wrong choices, we deal with these promptly. This has ensured the school is calm, orderly and organised. Clear boundaries are becoming embedded and whilst we all recognise the 'bumps' along our journey, we are committed to maintain the high standards established at the beginning of term. I want to thank the very many parents who recognise the 'need for change' in the school and their support since September.

We know that the school has gone through some turbulent times recently. It is now becoming stable. My job is to make sure we deliver on providing your child with a good education, in an environment where they can prosper, thrive and grow.

On behalf and staff, pupils and governors, may I wish you all a restful and peaceful Christmas and a Happy New Year.

We look forward to seeing all pupils on their return to school on Tuesday, 5<sup>th</sup> January 2021.

Mr Chris Keen  
Principal