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Dear Parent,

It has been damp and overcast for most of this week and I have reminded a few children to come to School with a coat. It is also essential that pupils have a full tracksuit for Games, pupils may wear base layers too. We like to keep outdoor activities as normal as possible at Ellesmere through the winter. These extra steps allow us to keep the pupils as comfortable as possible over the next few weeks until the spring sunshine arrives. Please could all school kit be named. This helps Mrs Arrowsmith and Mrs Lowe (Lower School secretaries) to return lost items and keep their lost property bin from overflowing!

We have been encouraging healthy eating again in Lower School. Fruit is available for a child to eat at break and playtime should they feel hungry. We prefer that children do not bring sugary snacks into College. Pupils have tuck shop once per week as a treat and spending is restricted to sensible amounts.

An InTouch letter went out to inform parents of details regarding the forthcoming parent meetings for Year 7 and Year 6. Due to Covid restrictions, these are online meetings with the Personal Tutor, who will discuss overall performance and progress. Please follow the instructions on the letter to book appointment times.

Pupils have enjoyed playing in a wide range of competitive sports over the first few weeks of term. It is also good to see the choir growing in size too! We have appreciated hearing the musicians and singers performing during the Chapel services.

The cricket coaches have been encouraging attendance at lunchtime cricket nets. Pupils may attend the winter net programme, even if they have never played cricket before. Mr Jones advocates that 'winter net' play certainly helps to get the summer cricket season off to a flying start. It is good to be thinking of the better weather ahead!

It is assessment week next week. Pupils will be given revision areas to look over, ready for these small snapshot assessments. The results inform teachers for tracking progress. They also help to gently develop academic rigour and resilience.

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A Faraday Engineering STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) challenge is set for a number of Year 8 pupils next Wednesday. Half of the year will attend and then the second challenge is later in the Summer Term for the other half of the Year 8 group. We have had a number of children emerge as excellent engineers in the past. Some pupils saw this event as a catalyst to their interest that developed into University course directions. We will watch these events with interest.

The School Entrance Exam morning is on Saturday 5th February. Please contact Admissions should you require any further information for anyone considering a place for a child at the College.

Lower School House Cross Country is on the afternoon of Thursday 3rd February. Once again, it has to be an in-house event for the children. Pupils have been steadily improving their personal performances in PE lessons. The focus is certainly simply just 'trying ones best'. All members of the House team are awarded points for simply completing the course. The children really enjoy their hot chocolate at the end of the afternoon.

Please note that it is important that we know when a child is staying after 5.30pm for an activity. Please check that your child has notified their tutor, who will ensure the after-school list is updated.

Have a good weekend when it arrives. There are no fixtures due to Exeat weekend arrangements.

Yours sincerely