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Friday 17th September 2021

Dear Parent,

It has been a warm and fine week. It has been good that the children have been outside a lot, expending energy. We are very lucky to have such lovely facilities to use.

Lessons have been busy and pupils appear to be working well. We have enjoyed Chapel services and House meetings. It is good to feel a sense of the normal routines returning.

A number of pupils have been nominated for their kindness towards others. The Kindness Wall of recognition will start next week. We do know that children will get things wrong from time to time. It will be a learning experience for many to share and have empathy to the needs of others. However, our message is always clear and firm in respect of this.

Personal tutors have been working away at making the initial contact calls to all parents of their tutees. Please remember that the personal tutor is there for families as the first line of contact with any information or concern. Mrs Leonard, the Lower School Secretary, is on hand to help should families wish to e-mail or telephone with a question. If she doesn't know the answer to a query, she finds out for you or points you in the right direction.

The Year 7 pupils plus new to Ellesmere Year 8 pupils took their CATs assessments this week. It was to their credit that they managed these short assessments with little fuss. It was good to see. Mr Dilks, Deputy Head Lower School Academic, oversaw the session and it appeared to be a very slick affair.

We have a prep room open at lunch times. Pupils are encouraged to manage their time effectively and should another activity cut across the evening prep slot, they may work in the prep room to balance their studies. Personal tutors will help with this. Prep should only last for 20 minutes per subject in Years 7 and 8. Should a child take much more time and struggle with this, please chat to their personal tutor who will help. KS2 teachers will set spellings and reading and generally lead with any directive for that age group. We do not wish children to become anxious learners at such a young age. Maybe give it a week or so for patterns to settle.

We are lucky to have a friendly and active Parent Society at Ellesmere. They organise some wonderful events. They warmly open an invitation to any parent who would like to join their group. They have meetings and a good social time together too. They can be contacted directly on the email ecps@ellesmere.com.

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Lunch time activities are opening up. Cricket nets have been popular and chess club is attracting much attention. Mr Williams will provide a matrix soon to help children look at what is on each day.

There are hockey and rugby fixtures this weekend. All information can be found on the Parent Portal or by e-mail to Mr Williams should things become confusing: ian.williams@ellesmere.com

Still on a fixtures note, it is worth checking the White College Calendar for the forthcoming fixtures. Pupils should play if selected. They will also need a full school uniform for match tea. It is an expectation that all players take the opposition to match tea. We like to promote the etiquette that surrounds playing sport in a friendly and sociable way. Parents are warmly welcome to spectate and join afterwards for refreshments. Girls will require a gum shield and shin pads to play hockey. Please contact either Mr Williams or the individual coaching member of staff with any questions. Please could a letter be directed to the Headmaster should a child have problems with playing if they are selected and please give the coaches a decent amount of notice to allow another selection etc.

Very important message about after match hospitality. As we return to inter-school sport so will our after-match hospitality. This will be offered mostly in the School dining hall. Can I please stress that face masks will be required to enter the dining hall and may only be removed to eat. Please use the hand sanitisation before entering the hall which is located just outside the hall doors. We are pleased to be able to offer hospitality again but are still taking reasonable precautions with larger gatherings indoors.

Be assured that we are trying our best to keep infections at bay, to assist us with this if your child is unwell please keep them at home.

Have a good weekend once it arrives and I hope that the weather is good.

Yours sincerely