

11 December 2023

Dear Parents/Carers

End of term arrangements

Tuesday 19 December is the last day of term before the Christmas break. Students in Years 9 and 10 will depart at 12.15pm. Buses will arrive early. Students in Year 11 will depart after their morning exam at around 11am and Sixth Form students finish at break.

Term begins for all students at 8.40am on Thursday 4 January 2024.

Re: Pre-Loved Uniform Event – Monday 15 January 2024

The standard of dress is high and all students need to be in uniform in school. We seek to support families to provide uniform where money is tight. We will be holding another Pre-Loved Uniform event for all parents/carers on Monday 15 January 2024. This event will be taking place in the library from 3.30pm-4.30pm. There will be a wide range of second-hand uniform available all of which is in good condition and will have been laundered prior to the event. We ask only for a donation towards each garment where possible. All donations go towards the dry cleaning of the uniform or the purchase of further uniform to be used for future events.

We greatly appreciate any spare uniform you no longer need and these can be handed in to the school office ahead of the event. Alternatively, items can be dropped off at our prime uniform provider, Wear2School, ahead of the event.

Vandyke Road

The new housing developments opposite the school have changed the logistics for some students who now seek to access school through the new estates or across the fields, crossing the rail tracks and Vandyke Road, in some cases navigating a significant ditch. While understandable that students seek a short-cut, these routes are both hazardous and, at this time of year, wet and very muddy. Students should not be accessing school in this way. Please encourage your daughter/son to take the longer route via Nelson Road/ Churchill Road/ Clarence Road.

I have taken up with the local council, councillors and the MP the lack of a thorough-fare from the new housing development off Kemsley Drive (Seddon Gardens, etc). This appears to be the result of a lack of planning and joined up thinking. It is a failure to recognise that children of families living on the new estates will need to access the schools in a convenient and safe way. I hope that a practical solution can be found quickly.

Water safety

Please find attached a letter from the local council about the dangers of walking on iced over lakes, rivers and canals and discuss this with your daughter/son to raise their awareness.

Safeguarding

Every student should feel safe and welcome in school. I know how hard staff work to ensure that this is the case. Students know who they should speak to if they have a particular concern including about bullying. Students can also use the ***tellme@vandyke*** email to report a concern as an alternative to speaking in person to a member of staff. These come directly to me and senior colleagues and will always generate a prompt response.


Parking

I write again about car parking on site. Car park spaces are limited and managed expertly by our site team and duty staff. We have a system of permits for staff and Sixth Form drivers (Year 13 only) and employ double parking using some spaces on grassed areas to increase capacity. My plea to all users of the site is to drive slowly because we have children on bikes and pedestrians using the footpaths and crossing the car park areas at time. But also for all users of the site to be considerate of others in terms of being patient, not blocking entry points and exits, and respecting that the disabled bays are reserved for those who need them.

Finally, as 2023 draws to its close, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you again for your continued support this year and to wish you and your family a very Happy Christmas.

If you have any questions about these or any further matters please contact office@vandyke.cbeds.co.uk.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tim Carroll', with a stylized, flowing script.

Tim Carroll

Headteacher