

23 June 2021

Dear Families,

Firstly, we would like to apologise for the lack of information around the decision to cancel the Year 11 Prom and to provide you with further rationale that led to this decision. On receipt of advice from our Public Health Advisor last week, Miss Hill acted swiftly to inform families of the cancellation to reduce the potential of any Prom-related purchases over the weekend. This was, however, prior to us being able to agree a more detailed communication.

Secondly, we would like you to be aware of the next steps we are taking.

#### Rationale for decision last week

The data from Buckinghamshire has shown there is a rise in the Delta virus in our region, which is rising in our schools and community. Consideration for events taking place in schools and academies is under continual review and advisement to ensure we all keep our community safe by working together to limit social interaction. This is where the term social responsibility arose. As a government-funded organisation, we have a responsibility to promote good practice and follow government guidelines when planning events.

The following factors were considered when making the decision to cancel the Year 11 Prom:

1. Year 11 students are no longer in their year group bubble or following the control measures we have in place at the academy. Therefore, every student could be mixing more widely and increasing their risk of infection prior to the date of the Prom.
2. If one student or staff member became unwell with Covid-19 symptoms following the event, it is likely that the whole community that attended the event would need to isolate, i.e. all students and staff at the event.
3. The impact of the above is wide-ranging and would affect any family of students or staff that attended the event. Any family who had a planned holiday or event would be affected due to the ten-day isolation period and that person would not be able to go on holiday or attend other family events. This could in some instances mean a whole family could not go on holiday.
4. With increased rates of the Delta variant in schools and the community, there is a risk that at least one person could contract the virus at this event.
5. If the rate of infection continues to rise there is a risk the government will extend the lockdown dates again, which would lead to a last-minute cancellation. This could lead to further disruption to families and increased costs that may be unrecoverable due to last minute cancellations.

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6. A Prom in the last week of term means that senior staff would be expected to be 'on duty' to carry out the track and trace process for a further 10 days following the event, thus falling into their summer break. This is something that we would ideally like to avoid, given that they/we need to be back on duty by 10 August to handle GCSE and A Level results and the fact that members of the team already have holidays booked.
7. As the new potential date was so close to 19 July it would be a risk to continue just in case the government once again had to push back the date resulting in us having to cancel the Prom at a much later date, meaning many more families may well lose money paid towards Prom outfits etc that could not be refunded.

The balance of student and staff wellbeing were important factors in making the decision to cancel Prom and it was not taken lightly.

### Next Steps

We are fully aware how devastating this decision has been for students and staff and have already been back in touch with the local representative for Public Health England to investigate additional control measures that could be put in place, which may help to lessen the impact of concerns raised last week.

We will continue to review options this week, monitor the changes in the community and reassess the situation on Monday 28 June with our Public Health Advisor. As Miss Hill referred to in her last communication, if there is anything we can do to allow the event to run we will do it.

However, our first priority will always be the health, safety and wellbeing of all students, staff and families. If there is evidence and information available that will allow us to proceed with the event, we will let you know on Tuesday 29 June.

Yours faithfully,

**Ms J Meloni**      **Ms L Kelly**  
Headteacher      Academy Business Manager

