

25th November 2025

Dear Parents/Carers

I can hardly believe I'm already writing a Christmas update letter. For the record, I'm not in tune with the Asda Christmas Grinch - more like Scrooge before the ghosts. Anyway, I digress; as a parent, I understand the wonderful complexity of the Christmas period, so I thought it appropriate to give you advance notice of what's happening at school.

Firstly, on **9th December**, the school choir will be joining the massed choir of the Trust in a performance at Hereford Cathedral. I am assured by Mr Harrison that it will be an uplifting experience.

Then, on **11th December**, we have the joys of our own service at St Laurence's Church. We are grateful to Canon Andrew Teale for agreeing to lead the service. Yet again, I am assured by Mr Figliola that it will be something I will not forget.

On **16th December**, the Ski Trip departs. I would like to thank all the staff who have volunteered to participate in this. It is a lovely event to be able to offer students, and I thank Mr Jardine for organising. I am not even slightly anxious.

On **17th December**, we will be having our "Christmas Dinner." I genuinely believe that school should be a family. Like any family, we have our ups and downs, but I do not charge my children for Christmas Dinner; therefore, I will not be charging yours. On the Wednesday, we will have a slightly different layout to the day. There will still be five lessons (not Gold Rings) as normal, but each year group will have just one one-hour break/lunch. This will be when we will have Christmas lunch. ***There will be nothing else on sale for that day, so if you think that your child will not wish to have a free Christmas Dinner, please send them in with a packed lunch for the day.***

On **18th December**, we will be running the attendance and behaviour reward trip. Mrs Morris (Assistant Head) will send detailed information to the students who have qualified for this reward. The trip is optional, and we will be visiting Merry Hill Shopping Centre. The school will provide transport to and from the venue, but students will need to bring their own spending money.

I should warn you in advance - expect children to return full of sugar and possibly accompanied by an impressive collection of 'Build-a-Bear' creations. Happy surprise Christmas present!

Finally, on **19th December**, we reach the end of the Autumn term. We will be having a normal teaching day for the first two hours of the day. We will then suspend the timetable, and break/lunch will be combined for a 40-minute period. The children will then go to Form for a series of activities with their Form Tutor, e.g., Christmas party/quizzes etc. - I'm reliably informed this is 'fun' stuff. The school will then close early at 1.00 pm. We will contact the bus companies and inform you of the updates around travel as soon as possible.

Cont'd...

I hope that when you get there, you have a lovely Christmas. I know the realities of making this special and the pressures on parents/carers around providing gifts as well as filling the table on the day. Although we are doing all of this because we care, I know that the most magical Christmases I remember are based around just all my family being together. Presents break and fads change, but memories and family last. Damn, I almost sound Christmassy - 'Bah Humbug'!

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'M Stoppard', written in a cursive style.

Mr M Stoppard
Headteacher