

23rd October 2026

Dear Families,

I am writing with my end-of-term update for the first term of the 2026-27 academic year. We're thrilled with the positive start to the year that our students have made, especially those who have joined us this September in Year 7, Year 12 or across our other year groups. It has been great to see so many students involved in extra-curricular and enrichment activities beyond their lessons, with auditions and rehearsals for *Oliver!*, inter-house competitions, inter-school fixtures and sports activities, the thriving library and the many, many other clubs and groups at Churchill. I'd like to pay a particular tribute to our House Captains and Student Council members, whose excellent leadership continues to help improve the Academy.

I have also spoken in assemblies this week to our Year 11 students about the excellent approach to learning we saw when we visited a range of lessons last week, and emphasised the importance of making every moment count as they approach their first set of mock exams after half term. We have been talking to them about "riding in the peloton" and how they will achieve more if they all work together, pushing hard in the same direction, and making marginal gains in their own performance. It seems to be paying off! We wish them the best of luck in these important exams.

Attendance matters - top of the Trust!

As well as [winning two national attendance awards](#) from the Fischer Family Trust, we are also celebrating having the best attendance out of all the secondary schools in the Lighthouse Schools Partnership! I have also confirmed today that attendance for students eligible for free school meals at Churchill is the best in North Somerset. Thank you to every family, and the whole staff team, for ensuring that students attend school so regularly.

I'm also delighted to see that 590 students have managed to maintain 100% attendance for Term 1, showing great determination and commitment to their education. This is an increase of 140 on this time last year, showing the

significant strides forward that we have made, with the strong support of families. Well done to each and every one of them!

Attendance at school remains the single biggest factor influencing the attainment and progress of our young people, so please continue to support them by doing all you can at home to ensure good attendance.

Parent-friendly schools



As many of you know, we have partnered with ParentKind, a national charity aimed at giving those with a parenting role a voice in education, to help shape and strengthen our partnership working with our parent community. Last year we were accredited as a “Parent-friendly school” under their kitemark scheme.

I was delighted to meet with a group of parents earlier this term to take our partnership working to the next level, as we work towards the Silver Award from ParentKind this year. To support this work, we will be holding a “Friends of Churchill” meeting for any parents or carers of current Churchill students who are interested in working with us towards this goal. The meeting will take place on 25th November at 6pm. If you are interested, please [sign up here](#) and look out for further information after half term.

Phone-free Churchill

Thank you for all the positive feedback we have received from families about the introduction of phone pouches after half term. In case you missed it, [you can read the letter explaining the approach on our website here](#). I have held assemblies this week for all five houses in the main school to explain the process to them, and we look forward to the launch of this new approach on Tuesday 3rd November.

Open evenings and admissions applications

We have held two very successful open evenings over the course of Term 1. Firstly, in September, we held an evening for those interested in joining Year 7, and more recently, our Sixth Form Open Evening. Applications to join Year 7 need to be made by Friday 31st October via your child's home local authority ([see our website for more information](#)).

Applications for Churchill Sixth Form are open now to all students in Year 11. The "early bird" application deadline, to maximise the chance of getting the subject combination you want, is 4th January 2027. For further details and a link to the application form, please visit this page: [Join our Sixth Form](#).

Information about our curriculum

Following on from our curriculum information evenings earlier in the year, the curriculum pages of the Academy website have been fully updated with the latest information. If you visit the [Curriculum page on our website](#) you will find an overview of our curriculum plan. At the bottom of that page, you will also find a series of curriculum booklets, one for each year group in the main school, providing detailed information about the programme of study in each subject throughout this academic year. Information about the Sixth Form curriculum can be found on the [Sixth Form Course List](#) page.

INSET day: extended half term

Please remember that the Academy is closed to students on Monday 2nd November due to an INSET day, giving our students a well-deserved extended half term break.

We look forward to welcoming students back on Tuesday 3rd November, for a timetable week 2, when Year 11 will begin their first set of formal mock exams.

Thank you for all your support across Term 1.

Yours sincerely,



Chris Hildrew, Headteacher