



# Thomas Mills

High School & Sixth Form

Headteacher: P J Hurst BA MA MBA NPQH

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Dear Parents,

6<sup>th</sup> December 2024

## **Headteacher's Update Letter 2024/2025 – Letter 5 (out of 5)**

As always, I trust this letter finds you well. I write to update you on a few matters which reflect the time of the year.

### **Non uniform Jumper or Christmas Jumper – Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> December 2024**

For the past few years, we have been able to support the Waveney Food Bank through a non-uniform or Christmas jumper. In return for wearing the non-uniform jumper we ask that students bring in one item for the Food Bank. Participation is voluntary and thank you in advance.

The Food Bank appreciate our efforts. Although they are grateful for any non-perishable products, they suggest the following items would be the most useful to them:

- UHT Milk
- Fruit juice (not chilled)
- Tinned potatoes
- Rice
- Tinned rice pudding
- Jars of cooking sauce
- Tinned vegetables
- Christmas items

There is no requirement that students buy a Christmas jumper.

### **School Closure Protocol**

It is that time of year where we keep a close eye on weather forecasts. Any decisions to close the school are usually considered by at least three factors: Police or Local Authority information; transport issues; as well as any site-specific information. An early decision is always best and ideally communicated by 7am, before many staff and parents leave the house. We will put a message on the school website and contact the Local Authority. The Local Authority update their website and inform local radio.

### **Safe Travel**

It's a good reminder to check vehicles for road worthiness. Students should also have a good reflective coat.

This week we have learnt of a specific incident that occurred on the 555 route (Earl Soham, Pettaugh, Debenham, Kenton). At one of the stops, a car driver who dropped a child off, allegedly parked on a private road and this affected a local resident. Although the ensuing incident is probably one for the Police, this is a reminder to us all about safe and considerate parking.

In general, it is important that everyone takes care. It is lovely living and working in the countryside, but this time of year brings its challenges!

## Attendance

Thank you for your ongoing support with attendance. It has been great to celebrate the successes in our recent 'attendance and punctuality focus fortnight' and to see so many of our students' figures improve. Congratulations to 7JLa who had an average attendance of 98.4%. Mrs McCartney our Senior Tutor has shared many form certificates and prizes.

The attendance team has re-iterated the importance of reporting absences to the attendance officer on the first day of absence by 9 am, ideally earlier.

Please email: [attendance@thomasmills.suffolk.sch.uk](mailto:attendance@thomasmills.suffolk.sch.uk)

or phone: [01728 726677](tel:01728726677)

as soon as possible, with the name of child, form, and the reason for absence (brief).

In the Sixth Form, emails can be sent to [sixthform@thomasmills.suffolk.sch.uk](mailto:sixthform@thomasmills.suffolk.sch.uk)

With new strengthened legislation and advice from Suffolk County Council, please note that the school will be issuing **fixed penalty notices for all unauthorised term time holidays** from January 2025. These will be issued when ten or more unauthorised absence sessions have been recorded (amounting to 5 whole days in total) within any rolling 10-week period. For further information, please see our attendance policy and the Suffolk County Council website.

## Fearless.Org

The following information was sent to us by Suffolk County Council:

Fearless.org is part of Crimestoppers. It is aimed at young people and provides information on a range of crime types and topics, as well as providing ways to report crime or information anonymously.

Fearless in schools is a way for young people to report crime and information anonymously. Fearless is the dedicated youth service of the independent charity Crimestoppers. They provide young people with the opportunity to give information about crime **100% anonymously**.

Information can be given using the [online form \(Give Information Anonymously - Crimestoppers\)](#) or by calling Crimestoppers on **0800 555 111**.

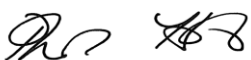
They are not the police. They are a charity. You will not be contacted by the police after passing information onto Fearless as the police have no way of knowing who the information has come from.

## Summary

As ever our school is busy and energetic with so much happening both inside and outside the classroom. It has been a pleasure showing our alumni and BBC Look East presenter Connor Bennett around the school recently. He enjoyed seeing the classes at work and meeting many of his former teachers. Hopefully we can maintain the energy until the end of term although UK Power Network is busily resolving power issues in Framlingham as I write.

Trusting that the weather is ok, and we all stay safe at this time of year as we head towards the Christmas Break.

Yours sincerely,



P J Hurst  
Headteacher