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13th January 2025

Dear Parents/Carers,

Some of you will be aware of the incredibly sad news that one of our Year 10 students, Ben Horton, passed away over the weekend after sudden and unexpected health complications.

Ben was a bright young student, full of character and kindness, who played an active part in our school community, including as a Year Group Leader. He particularly enjoyed Drama and Music and was heavily involved in our Student Council.

This news represents a great loss to our school and will be felt by all of us as staff and students who knew him well. Our thoughts are of course with his family and, on behalf of the school, I have shared our deepest condolences with them and offered whatever support we can at such a painful time.

During times such as this, we know how much young people appreciate routine and consistency and will therefore continue to operate as normal. Nevertheless, we will be putting in place additional measures of support for our students and have moved today's planned Year 10 mock examinations to later in the month.

We have been speaking to our Year 10s and other year groups to let them know what has happened. Staff are on hand throughout the day for students who may be struggling to come to terms with what has happened and who may need quiet spaces to reflect. We also have counsellors available to speak to any student for whom this would be helpful. If you think your child would benefit from this, please do encourage them to speak to our pastoral team who can arrange it.

Should you wish to, there are also many resources that parents and young people can access. These include:

- YoungMinds provides information for young people around coping with loss, including tips and advice for expressing grief. https://www.youngminds.org.uk
- Kooth an online counselling platform for young people with a host of resources about mental health including a live chat and forums https://www.kooth.com/

Our school will mourn the loss of Ben together, as a community, and support one another in dealing with the shock and sadness of this news. At an appropriate time we will of course be paying tribute to Ben's life and contribution to our school, to his family and friends, and within our local community.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to us if you have any concerns about your child or if you would like guidance on how to discuss this difficult matter with them.

Yours Faithfully

Mrs J McCann Principal

































