

May 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

I hope this letter finds you and your families well. I have resisted the urge to communicate with you until now, as I wanted to be sure that I was providing you with the most accurate and definitive information regarding transition arrangements for your child. As we approach the end of what has been an extremely challenging year for us all, there appears at last to be some genuine light at the end of the tunnel. However, even though we are beginning to see a slow return to more normal activities in our lives in general, schools are still operating under quite strict risk assessments. In this context, the Local Authority has informed us that the process of transition this year will once again have to be done virtually. We will therefore not be able to facilitate any "on site" activities ahead of your child starting with us in September.

I know the step from Primary to Secondary School is a major milestone in a young person's life, and should be a time filled with excitement and anticipation, albeit tinged with some quite natural anxieties and maybe a little sadness around leaving the security afforded by the Primary School setting. However, current circumstances have made the transition process far more challenging for pupils, their families and schools alike. Rather than enjoying a final opportunity to engage in the traditional rites of passage associated with leaving Primary School, our young people have been forced to endure a period of lockdown and all its associated doubt and uncertainty.

I can imagine you have a number of questions regarding how we are planning for transition this year; I just want to reassure you that we are all really looking forward to eventually meeting our new cohort and are doing everything we can to support the smooth transfer from their Primary School to us at Olchfa.

Having facilitated a virtual transition last year, we are in a position to confidently ensure we can support you and your child to be able to enjoy a happy, purposeful and productive start to school life at Olchfa.

Our Pastoral Team led by our Year 7 Learning Leader Mr. Dave Thomas is in close contact with all our partner Primary Schools, gathering key information that will allow the staff at Olchfa to be able to appropriately challenge and support our new cohort when they arrive with us in the new academic year. Our Primary colleagues are currently the ones who know your child best and they are a fantastic resource in providing us with academic and pastoral information which will prove key in allowing them to thrive and optimise their academic and social potential at Olchfa and life beyond.

Mr. Thomas has also been very busy putting together a virtual transition resource for you, in the form of a video, which we are hoping to share with you in the coming weeks.

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This will help to give you and your child a real sense of what Olchfa is all about and introduce you to a number of key people who will play a pivotal role in your child's life at Olchfa over the next few years. The video will also provide you with some important information about the school's curriculum, which might typically have been picked up in our traditional transition week. We are also in the process of building a transition specific website with information and support materials which we feel will be of benefit to you and your child ahead of their start with us. We will also be planning a programme of activities which will allow your child to engage in virtual meetings with the staff and pupils at Olchfa where they will be able to ask questions about what life at Olchfa is like.

I understand that this situation is not ideal, but you have to trust me that we are doing all we can to make sure your child gets off to the best start possible, when they eventually begin their journey with us at Olchfa. I know that many of you may still have further questions, understandably so, but this is all the detail I am able to share with you right at this moment.

We will be in touch shortly as the materials I referenced earlier become available.

Yours sincerely

Hugh Davies
Headteacher