

## **POSITIVE FEEDBACK**

### **Positive messages from parents and the community**

**September 2020 - August 2021**

#### ***September 2020***

##### **For Year 7 Teachers**

...We wanted to end this message by asking you to pass our thanks onto all of G's teachers. We appreciate how challenging this situation is for all of them and realise that teaching some children in person at the same time as half a class online must be extremely difficult. Our thanks go to them for the care that they have shown and dedication to including the children who are at home so that they still feel part of the school.

Received: 29/09/20

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##### **Thank you**

Just to a quick email to say thank you for all your hard work to enable my children to continue their education at IGS.

I know that the challenges you have are many and varied and I can only say that both my children are loving being back and are both very positive about all that you are doing.

*Received: 29/09/20*

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##### **Seamless Transition**

We will crack on at full speed at home and follow everything as directed by IGS. Thank you for the seamless transition for E with classes picking up online just hours after we brought her home yesterday. Very very impressive and please pass on our thanks to all concerned for an amazing job superbly well done!

*Received: 23/09/20*

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##### **Settling the new year 7's**

I just wanted to send a quick email to say a huge thank you for all the work you have done so far to settle the new year 7's into their classes.

My daughter is a naturally shy person who has never been one to push herself forward and as a result was extremely nervous about starting IGS.

H has come home every night this week absolutely full of beans with tales from her days at school. She is undoubtedly loving every minute so far.

The new friends she is making, the tutors and the variety of lessons are all reasons why she is enjoying her time at IGS so very much.

I am quite overwhelmed at how happy and confident she is. It really is lovely. So, as I said I just wanted to say thank you!

*Received: 11/09/20*

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##### **Starting in year 7**

My son A started in year 7 this week and he has described his week as the best ever. He has enjoyed all his lessons, the food, the ipad, everything!

I wanted to pass on my thanks to all the team who I can tell have worked hard to make the transition to 'Grammar' go well.

*Received: 11/09/20*

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#### ***October 2020***

##### **Thank you**

Thank you for all your efforts in keeping our children within the school environment- hope those that are going to take a break are able to so.

*Received: 22/10/20*

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##### **Happy at school**

Having just read Mrs Purnell's update I wanted to send some positive feedback to the whole IGS team. Despite the unprecedented level of challenge we are all facing you are collectively managing to provide a fabulous education for our children. Both our sons are happy at school and really enjoy being there with their friends, teachers and support staff. We don't underestimate the amount of planning, head scratching and sheer determination it takes to do that at the moment. Having witnessed some of the online learning for year 7, I was so impressed by the teachers positivity at a time when they must be under a huge amount of pressure themselves.

Thank you.

*Received: 22/10/20*

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### **Lovely staff**

I just wanted to write to you to say I am in awe of all of you. Your team have done you so so proud Mrs Purnell. I just wanted to let you know as all people seem to want to do is moan and complain that credit is due and you should pat yourself on the back.

Thank you all, lovely staff, for just getting on with it and putting your fear to one side to get these kids back.

I'm ready for half term, guessing it just can't come soon enough for you and your gang ?

Thanking you and your team again.

*Received: 22/10/20*

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### **Doing a great job**

Just a note to say thank you for the recent school update. It's clear for everyone to see that the teachers and support staff are working really really hard and doing a great job and it's very much appreciated.

Thanks to all of them from us- hope they all have a restful half term and catch up on some well-deserved R&R!

*Received: 21/10/20*

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### **Fabulous first half term**

Just a quick note to say 'thank you' to you and your team for a fabulous first half term.

Our daughter J has settled in very well. Team Green have been wonderful, caring, fun, inspiring, supportive...

Extremely difficult times for you all, just wanted you to know your efforts are very much appreciated.

*Received: 21/10/20*

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### **Fantastic Team**

Thank you very much for this note and for everything you and your team have done over the past half term. Both P and N have really enjoyed being back in school. The communication from school has been very good. The online parents evening worked really well. P has received great help with her university choices and UCAS.

N has been one of the Year 11 students who have had to self isolate for the last two weeks. His teachers have been fantastic, but it has not been a lot of fun for him to be stuck in his room.

Thanks you once again for everything you and your fantastic team have done.

*Received: 21/10/20*

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### **Year 11 Parents Evening 13/10/20**

Well done to all of the teachers who successfully conducted the virtual parents evening yesterday.

Despite a few blips on the connection for some of the calls on the whole it worked very well. The new norm possibly? Much more efficient use of time instead of walking all over the 'rabbit warren' areas of the school!!

*Received: 20/10/2020*

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### **Amazing hard work**

We just wanted to say a huge thanks to you and your team for all the amazing hard work that's been going on to keep the students at school. These are undoubtedly challenging times and whilst school may not be quite the same I can honestly say that having some semblance of a normal routine has been a real positive for both E and J.

*Received: 19/10/2020*

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### **Year 11 virtual parents' evening**

Thank you for your fast reply I know you are under tremendous pressure and I thank you for supporting my children.

IGS has done an amazing job during this terrible time. I was very impressed with the year 11 virtual parents evening.

While nothing beats face to face I felt your staff did an outstanding job.

*Received: 15/10/2020*

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### **Year 11 self-isolating students**

Thank you for everything you continue to do.. the guidance given and communication were clear and the process was dealt with super efficiently. You are all doing an absolutely brilliant job (online learning, resources , etc, etc)

*Received: 15/10/2020*

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### **The ipad arrangement**

I just wanted to say a huge thank you to all the teachers who are providing excellent online support for my two children. I was never a fan of the ipad arrangement but I can see now that it's made the change almost seamless for them and given them so much independence. The contact with teachers has been very individualised and supportive and I know they are working extra hard to make this happen. Best of luck with the next steps!

*Received: 13/10/20*

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### **Challenging time**

Thank you for everything you are doing in this challenging time, we are so grateful to be part of IGS.

*Received: 02/10/20*

### **November 2020**

#### **Potential Future Post-16 Student**

I must congratulate you all on a fantastic virtual event last night. A particular highlight was hearing from the head boy & girl. They spoke with such confidence and passion, a credit to your school.

*Received: 12/11/2020*

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#### **A Great Big Thank You**

School staff are not getting the credit they deserve during this time. You are all very much appreciated in the M house.

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#### **A Big Thank-you**

I'd just like to say thank you to you and the school team for all that you are doing to keep our children learning at this incredibly difficult time. The whole situation is incredibly challenging and for schools as a whole, it seems virtually unsustainable. You all deserve medals and a huge pay rise. Sadly, I cannot offer either of these things but I can say a big thank you.

*Received by: 10/11/20*

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#### **Organised Out-of-School Education**

Call received from a parent in Year 7 who has been at home isolating due to a family member having Covid symptoms. She would just like to say how impressed she has been with how organised the school have been with F's out of school education. She stated that she was so happy that there was no break in his learning and everything was so well organised on his iPad and emails from his subject teachers etc. She passed on her thanks.

*Received: 04/11/20*

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#### **PE Cross Country**

Call received from a member of the public who was walking her dogs on Ilkley Moor this morning and observed our students carrying out PE Cross Country. She stated that our students were wonderfully polite and considerate and maintained social distancing at all times. She was delighted that they thanked her and stated she hoped her sons were as considerate when they come to attend at our school.

*Received: 04/11/2020*

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#### **Year 8 Cross country run**

This afternoon during our gentle stroll around the tarn we met Year 8 on their cross country run. Without exception their behaviour was impeccable. They wove their way through assorted elderly walkers, dogs and toddlers with good humour and courtesy - giving everyone a suitably wide berth. Well done Year 8!

*Received: 02/11/2020*

### **December 2020**

To: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

#### **Doing a brilliant job**

Hope you know as parents we think you are doing a brilliant job, and are incredibly appreciative of all that you do for our children. I don't know if I can assist in any way...Very happy to support in any way I can.

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#### **Thanks**

Thanks a lot for below. And I am really sorry for all the extra stress the changes brought by covid have done to you and the staff. And as a parent, we are very proud of you and your team efforts.

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#### **Thanks for the kind message**

My daughter has thoroughly enjoyed her first term at IGS and is very happy. She has said so on multiple occasions. The communication regarding the pandemic has been very clear and the schools ability to provide as much normality as possible for the pupils has been welcomed.

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#### **Christmas Update**

Thank you so much for sharing this. We hope you have a good holiday and well deserved break.

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#### **Thank you for the update**

Thank you for the update and really appreciate all the work you've put in to help and support the pupils, we really do appreciate it.

Hope you all manage to enjoy the last couple of days of the holidays.

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### **Thank you to teachers**

I just wanted to say a very big thank you to the teachers of year 13. My son is isolating whilst two family members await tests and I am really impressed that Mr M has been doing online, engaging lessons just for one student who is missing. This really does help, not only in keeping education going but also in keeping connected and engaged and taking his mind off any worries he may have.

I am so impressed that teachers take the time to include remote learners, especially just for one student and also do this so well. I think the commitment, tenacity and caring from teachers at IGS is second to none. Thank You

*Received: 17 December 2020*

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### **Christmas Greetings**

We just wanted to get in touch and say a huge thank you to all of you for your hard work this year. It must have been one of the most challenging years ever but you have all risen to the challenges to keep our children motivated, educated and most of all safe. We were so incredibly impressed by the lessons provided during lockdown and the excellent communication between school and home. It certainly kept N and T going and broke up some of those long lockdown days. Also, with the endeavours you have made to bring children back to school safely but also, keeping it as 'normal' as possible. They may not say it but I know they appreciate this.

We wish you all a happy and restful Christmas and a better 2021.

*Received: 16 December 2020*

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### **Christmas update**

Many thanks for this detailed update. Please can I pass on my heartfelt thanks to each and every member of the IGS staff for keeping the school open and functioning so normally in these trying times.

In my household, having school open September – December has been a massive improvement not only with regards to learning but also my children's mental health (and probably my own too) compared to the situation March – July, although as I fed back at the time, that doesn't take away from how grateful I was over IGS's management of the situation in that time period too. In a nutshell, you are all doing brilliantly and every day my children step on the school bus feels a blessing.

Thank you from one very grateful parent.

*Received: 16 December 2020*

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### **THANK YOU**

We wanted to send a huge thank you to you and all the staff at Ilkley Grammar School for the tremendous work that has gone into keeping students in school this term so they could continue their education in these very challenging times. Thank you also for keeping us so well informed about the many changes imposed on schools this year.

The support for Sixth Form throughout the USAS process has been excellent. The virtual events we attended such as the Post-16 evening with many clips from current sixth formers as well as two online parents' evenings ran very smoothly and provided us with so much information.

We hope you have a relaxing and very well deserved Christmas break.

*Received: 16 December 2020*

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### **Christmas Update**

Thank you for the update. Once again I want to thank you and the team for your amazing commitment to the school and the children. It has been a huge positive for us to have the school operating normally and the support from all the teachers for our daughter has been tremendous.

Wishing you all a well-earned Christmas break

Received: 15/12/20

### **January 2021**

#### **Thanks again**

Just to say another big thank you to all staff at IGS. Another very productive week of education despite the press saying schools continue to be closed for a longer period – teachers and staff are clearly working very hard to ensure that school is 'not closed' and are delivering education virtually.

*Received: 29 January 2021*

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"Thank you so much for all the hard work you are doing for the pupils in such a horrible and worrying time for everyone. You are doing an amazing job making sure the children can continue learning, despite regulations and plans changing all the time, last minute announcements and such confusing methods. I am in awe of you and couldn't imagine being in your shoes!"

Year 9 Parent

"Hats off to IGS, I've always been really impressed by the school's pastoral care. It's second to none"  
Year 9 parent

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#### **Thanks for letting us know**

We really appreciate all the hard work the teachers are putting in to the home learning to engage the students. It's keeping 'I' on track!

Many thanks

**Received:** 26 January 2021

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#### **Many thanks**

I have a daughter in Year 7 and a son in Year 9. As you know they have been studying from home, I have been lucky enough to overhear parts of their live lessons.

I just wanted to say a huge thank you and well done to all the staff involved. I feel the lessons I have heard have been conducted in a very professional, yet personal manner. It is amazing how the teachers and children have adapted to remote learning.

Please will you pass on my thanks to all the teachers involved in teaching my children. We are extremely grateful.

**Received:** 22 January 2021

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#### **FSM Food Parcel**

I just wanted to say, as this was the first time I had picked up the fsm food parcel, that I was completely overwhelmed by it. I just wanted to say Thank You to all of you involved, for all of your efforts in doing this for us.

**Received:** 20 January 2021

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#### **Thanks**

Just wanted to say how grateful I am to the school staff for supporting the children in these strange times.

The teachers have been approaching the lessons with enthusiasm and professionalism making the children feel motivated and included. I know my daughter seems to be treating the experience as a normal school day.

**Sent:** 18 January 2021

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#### **Huge thank you**

I just want to say a huge thank you to you and everyone involved in putting the remote learning together. It has been a godsend knowing the girls are occupied and working in a live lesson leaving me to get on with my own work.

**Sent:** 15 January 2021

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#### **Big thank you**

I just wanted to send a big thank you to you and to all the staff at IGS for all their hard work, dedication and enthusiasm.

I am so impressed with the way they are inspiring the children and keeping them motivated and interested during lockdown.

Thank you so much, I think that you are all doing a great job and it is very much appreciated.

**Received:** 15 January 2021

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#### **Really impressed**

I have been really impressed by the return "to school" after the Christmas break. It is clear that there has been a substantial amount of time, effort and work put in by the staff to put systems into place to ensure that the remote learning can be the best it can be. As a parent that is also working from home it has been really useful (for all three of us) to have the structure of the school routine and O and M are definitely getting more out of the Teams lessons than the remote learning last year. I appreciate that the hard work is continuing as teaching progresses and there is the ever pending threat of further changes being issued by the Government. I just wanted to say thank you – you all (and that includes all of the staff) are doing a great job and it is appreciated!

**Received:** 15 January 2021

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#### **Post 16 thank you**

Can I also thank you and the staff at IGS for supporting our kids through this difficult situation. I really appreciate the efforts that have been made to accommodate the ever changing demands from government - what you have all achieved in keeping teaching and motivating the students is extraordinary !

**Received:** 13 January 2021

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**To:** [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk) Subject: Ilkley grammar school, Ilkley, west yorkshire

I thought I would share my feedback with you following the request from Gavin Williamson [Secretary of State for Education]. Today I have sat in all day on my 12 year old sons lessons, I had time for once and this was not to check on the teachers but to ensure that on the one day I could, I could ensure he concentrated and didn't drift off in his

head with a football. I just cannot congratulate our teachers working in these insane conditions enough. Every teacher I watched was pulled from pillar to post in the online lessons by chat messages and over eager learners vying for attention. My head is still spinning from watching the last lesson English in which the fabulous teacher appeared to be getting pecked by a flock of hens. He handled it with patience, approachability and with a huge sense of calm. Often people will only email with the bad, there is so so much brilliance out there and felt the need to let you know that this bunch of teachers at my local state school are utterly amazing. I am not a teacher just a very grateful mum who wanted you to be aware they are doing you very very proud.

*Received: 08 January 2021*

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#### **Heartfelt thanks**

Please let me add my heartfelt thanks to all staff at IGS for the start to home learning and for all the communications you have provided us parents with over the matter.

The 8.30 registration is a great idea. I have listened in to a couple of them and the few moments of words of support and motivation from my children's tutors are really thoughtful. It also adds structure to the day by following the normal school routine. My children have been lucky enough to have had all live lessons so far (which I know is IGS's intention where ever possible), and I think it really has been much more motivating to them to have extensive contact with the teacher before getting on with work, rather than work just being posted. I had to have a little chuckle over PE. Gosh, its amazing how a teacher telling my kids to go for a run has so much more impact than a Mum!

There is no doubt for my two children being at school is far superior to being at home and it is a very difficult time, but that said, the home learning programme from IGS in the last week has been fantastic and I'm very grateful of this for my children's current wellbeing and long-term future.

I know for many, it will have meant you have not had the Christmas breaks you deserved after a challenging autumn term and others, like me, will now be juggling their own childcare with work. A big thank you for all your efforts.

*Received: 09 January 2021*

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**To: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk) Cc: IGS Admin Email Subject: Ilkley Grammar School**

I'd like to let you know what a great job of remote learning Ilkley Grammar School are doing. They have carried on all the lessons as normal and my son, who is autistic, has managed to be entertained all day every day.

It has meant I can carry on working on the days where my younger children have gone into school (I am a key worker).

*Received: 09 January 2021*

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**To: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)**

I would like to let you know that, as parents of children in years 10 & 12, we are in awe at the incredibly high quality of online teaching being provided this week, despite teachers being given only 12 hours notice to deliver it. The Headteacher, Carly Purnell, provides parents with exceptional communication and the teachers work relentlessly to ensure our children receive the best education possible under the most difficult circumstances. Our children are motivated and engaged in a full daily online timetable of learning and we are very grateful for the additional work that all staff make to put this in place.

*Received: 09 January 2021*

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#### **Thank you for all your hard work and dedication**

Just to say thank you so much for all your hard work to enable my children to continue their education online, in this extraordinarily challenging time.

I am amazed at how quickly you have all reacted individually and as a team, to implement the curriculum to ensure that the children will not miss out on any learning opportunity. Both my children are very much enjoying the contact with their teachers for the live lessons and the challenges each lesson presents.

Thank you again for all your hard work and dedication, I would have no doubt that you are more than exceeding any standards that ofsted could potentially look for.

*Received: 09 January 2021*

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#### **Thank you so much**

I would like to say thank you so much to her teachers for all of their efforts with regards to her lessons. I have been able to sit in parts of some of her classes and have been really impressed with how quickly the teachers have made lessons interesting and fun. I was also very impressed with the care and dedication that I have witnessed in her classes.

As pupil feed back L has said "all of her lessons have been very good and very well done"

A huge thank you from us and thank you as well to the teaching staff that have encouraged a walk or time away from the screens as this is also important guidance for the pupils to hear not only from parents

Thank you again to all staff for the help this week from IT helping us sort out remote working and the lovely staff on reception and L's form teacher.

Thank you again huge well done for all of your hard work

*Received: 08 January 2021*

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### **Thank you**

I would like to say a huge thank you to all the teachers and staff at IGS who are working so very hard, around the clock, to ensure our children continue to be inspired and learn.

We really do value and greatly appreciate all you are doing, so much on going respect for the teaching profession, especially in these extremely challenging circumstances.

*Received: 11 January 2021*

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### **Really appreciate your hard work**

Just to say how much we appreciate your endless hard work and that of your colleagues in responding to the continuing twists and turns that the government has imposed on you. It must be utterly frustrating and exhausting but somehow you are keeping going and finding ways to make it work. I very much appreciate your prompt communications at each stage and as the parents of a year 11 student who has worked hard over the holidays I appreciate that you are speaking to these concerns.

Thank you

Ps the feedback so far this week is that online learning is going well and much better than before.

*Received: 08 January 2021*

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### **Thank you**

I just wanted to email and pass on my thanks to all the staff at IGS for continuing to provide such an amazing education for our children, despite everything that's been thrown at you over the past weeks and months.

The quality of the remote lessons, the communication and the encouragement from the boys' teachers has been outstanding and the way you've all presented a 'business as usual' attitude towards the children's learning, despite the hundreds of extra hours of work, is quite remarkable!

Please pass on our thanks to everyone and I hope you have a well-earned rest this weekend.

*Received: 08 January 2021*

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### **So impressed with the online learning**

I just wanted to say I am SO impressed with the online learning IGS is providing this lockdown. B is in a routine & although he was under the weather yesterday he has been at his desk & engaged from the start of the day till mid afternoon.

Please pass on my gratitude & appreciation for all the hard work you & B's teachers are doing!

*Received: 08 January 2021*

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### **Amazing**

I just wanted to pass on my thanks and appreciation of a great week of online learning. As parents who have experienced the provision from primary school last lockdown and now with IGS this time around, I am blown away by the quality of teaching provided. The classes have been well thought out, engaging and very supportive. E has really enjoyed it. Hats off to you all as it must be such a challenging time but we think you are amazing!

*Received: Friday, January 8, 2021*

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### **School updates**

I have just read Carly Purnell's latest update and would like to say how impressed I am. The communication is thorough and clear and overall I think addresses excellently the understandably uncertain situation we are in by providing clarity where possible and being honest where it is not. More importantly it shows a great and positive attitude by simply dealing with the situation and noting the positives such as how the students are responding. This is very refreshing and sets a great example for the students. While they have had to miss out on so much I feel sure that their generation will show extra resilience too and the tone set by the school will undoubtedly have helped. So I would like to thank the school leadership and all the teaching staff (though especially those teaching our youngest who is now year 13) for their ongoing hard work but also for the example they have set.

*Received: 07 January 2021*

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### **Thanks**

I just wanted to say a big thank you for how well you are keeping us parents informed through all your emails full of information and the latest updates.

This must be such a very difficult and challenging time for you all as teaching staff as you follow government guidance and do what you feel is best for your pupils, whilst dealing I am sure with your own personal challenges and complications at home due to the lockdown and general restrictions.  
You do an amazing job and it is hugely appreciated.  
Good luck and many thanks

*Received: 07 January 2021*

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#### **Thank you**

Please pass on thanks to all IGS staff for the way in which they have reacted so positively to the ever changing news and continued to focus on supporting their students in these very difficult and challenging times.  
We are very grateful to everyone at the school.

*Received: 07 January 2021*

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#### **Thank you all for your ongoing support**

Whilst I have this opportunity, I would like to say thank you to everyone at the school for working throughout the pandemic, for providing ongoing updates to parents and trying to continue to provide education, as well as support to students. It must be immensely stressful at times with so much uncertainty and changing directives from government, and as a family we really appreciate your commitment. Thank you.

*Received: Thursday, January 7, 2021*

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#### **THANK YOU**

I'd like to just say thank you.... each time we go into home schooling either in lockdown or after school hols there is always another improvement to the process.

This time is particularly noticeable and the higher level of structure to O's day is a massive help.

He (we) really struggled last time, he got quite behind and was more importantly very low within himself.

Although he isn't jumping for joy at the thought of a day on his iPad (he didn't jump for joy at the thought of coming to school either!) he definitely seems more engaged.

*Received: 08 January 2021*

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#### **Lockdown School**

This is just a quick note to say how much I appreciate the lengths you and your staff are going to this term. It must feel like juggling on quicksand.

My son has had 2 well-structured and productive days (the timetabled breaks are particularly welcome) - his PE teacher has given them the option of going out for a run, which he has just done.

*Received: 06 January 2021*

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#### **Thank you!**

Once again I'm writing to acknowledge the incredible effort that you have all given since school returned in September 2020. Having to deal with an ever changing situation during Christmas must have been difficult for you and the rest of the teaching staff and I want you to know that this doesn't go unnoticed .

Thank you for the clear and regular communication and for the remote teaching provision that we once again have in place .

Please pass on our thanks and good wishes to all staff and I hope this emails goes some way to showing how much we appreciate everything that the school is doing for the children .

*Received: 05 January 2021*

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#### **School closure message**

Thank you so much for the emails you have sent out recently, especially the one we received so late last night.

Please be reassured that we really appreciate the dedication you and your team's have given to this situation.

We can't ask for more.

*Received: 05 January 2021*

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#### **Thank you so much for your reply.**

I can't tell you how grateful we are for all the work, pivoting and support you are giving our children and us as parents. I have many friends with children at IGS and the feedback is unanimously positive and full of gratitude for all IGS is doing. (thought you might like to hear this after what I suspect has not been a relaxing Christmas break for you and the IGS team)

#### **Thank you**

Just wanted to say thank you for the communications over Christmas. You are all doing a great job in the face of adversity. I think IGS provides great online learning and we're confident that our kids will continue to do well

whether online or face to face. All your staff are amazing, and I think you have been asked to do the impossible over the next few weeks. Please look after yourselves, hang in there!

*Received: 04 January 2021*

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### **Thank you**

I just had to write and say a huge thank you from me and my family. My husband and our three children are incredibly thankful for the open, honest and timely communication from Ms Purnell and other teaching staff at the school.

With two children in exam years there is definitely potential for stress levels to rise at home but with the emails you've sent, we are much better able to manage that situation - thank you!

And please don't apologise - you haven't intruded at all on our Christmas time, certainly not in comparison to how your break (if you've been able to have one) has been impacted.

*Received: 02 January 2021*

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### **Return to School: Remote Learning**

I just wanted to take this opportunity to thank you for providing this clear communication over the holidays, especially with regards to the information on the mock examinations.

We are very appreciative of all the efforts IGS is going to.

*Received: 02 January 2021*

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### **Thank you**

As a parent of a year 8 student please can I say thank you for all you are doing in this pandemic to keep all students as safe as you possibly can and for keeping us as parents informed and updated even during the time you should be relaxing with your own family. Please can you send a big thank you to all IGS staff for going above and beyond to enable our daughter and all students to be continually educated to a high standard in these difficult times.

Best wishes for 2021.

*Received: 02 January 2021*

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### **We would like to say thank you to yourself and all the staff at IGS.**

Throughout the Autumn term you have continued to keep school open for the children as much as you possibly can, and have provided the children with some much needed normality in these strange times. As a school you have continued to provide excellent teaching and learning whilst adapting to all the changes necessary to be 'COVID secure', often at very short notice.

We are really pleased with how well E has settled into Year 12 and how much she is enjoying it, again a testament to the hard work of the teachers and support staff at school.

It is very good to hear that the children will be receiving remote learning from the 5th January despite the government suggesting a later start date. Thank you for this, as a parent it is hugely reassuring to know that E will have contact with her teachers so that she can continue with her studies. We appreciate how hard you are trying to minimise the disruption to the children's education at IGS.

Thank you for taking up your time on New Year's Day to keep us informed.

## **February 2021**

### **Year 8 Parents' Evening - Tuesday 23rd February**

I would like to recognise the fantastic efforts of all the staff at IGS during the tough times we have all experienced under lockdown, the provision of online learning and the motivation of the staff has been excellent and you should all feel very proud of yourselves.

Evidence of this has shone through tonight as I have been able to join parents evening through the provision of 'joint appointments from a different device' and for most of the teachers it was their first experience of having two parents on the meetings. For me to be able to see and hear, first-hand the feedback provided was brilliant.

With the prospect of being able to back in the classroom very soon I feel is very positive target for both teachers and pupils and I hope all will go to plan.

'D' is certainly looking forward to being back with her teachers and peers, whilst she has embraced the challenge of home working, she has missed the excellent school environment.

Thank you for all your hard work and hope the continued success of IGS will continue going forward.

*Received: 23 February 2021*

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### **Personal Best Award & Thanks**

Thank you for the email acknowledging W's **ClassCharts** points. It certainly has been a challenging half term & I'm very proud of the resilience W has shown with his remote learning. However I also wanted to take the time to thank

each & everyone one of the teachers/staff at IGS for their invaluable contribution they have made to our children's education. The **ethos & values** that IGS provide are truly outstanding, we are very fortunate to have such a wonderful school.

*Received: 14 February 2021*

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### **You are doing an amazing job**

I just wanted to ask you to thank the whole staff group who are looking after Y7. You are doing an amazing job, I know my daughter is finding it as good as it can be in the circumstances. It's something of a privilege to 'overhear' the teaching too. This would of course be a rare opportunity in normal times!

*Received: 13 February 2021*

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### **What an amazing school**

I just wanted to let you know that my children are so lucky to be at Ilkley Grammar School. This half term your staff have been completely amazing. I have children in y7, 10 and 13, and as I walk through the house I can hear teachers' voices in every room. Their tone is so positive and encouraging, their lessons are amusing, entertaining and well organised. They also structure things so that children are learning to organise their own thinking and learning. I'm not sure how they manage to keep all the plates spinning and still be enthusiastic and funny, but I am so grateful that they do!

Please pass on our heart-felt thanks.

*Received: 12 February 2021*

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### **Mental Health and Wellbeing**

Thank you for your comprehensive school update email, including information on the mental health events. There seems so much to cover and additional requirements on the school, with extra effort necessary to meet the increasing demands.

It's great there is a focus on addressing positive mental health at this time. From my perspective I couldn't be happier with how my year 7 is settling into the school and remote learning.

I am confident she is in good hands, both with her tutor and all the teaching and support staff.

*Received: 10 February 2021*

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### **Messages received from families following the distribution of the meal kits during half-term:**

*Please will you pass on massive thanks from me to whoever organised the food hampers....they're absolutely amazing, and it's a huge help. Thank you.*

*Once again many thanks for the food parcels to all those kind people involved.*

*Thanks so much for organising! The two families I delivered to were amazed by how much there was and thought the recipe cards were fab a huge thanks to IGS for sorting packing etc.*

*I just wanted to say thank you so much to you all for the fabulous hamper kits, they are a God send & what a wonderful idea.*

*We are so grateful.*

*I just received the parcel. I am so touched by all involved's kindness. I will never forget the kindness I have been shown.*

*I would just like to say a massive thank you for our half term food delivery today. It's amazing. Well done to everyone. I am very grateful to be part of such a fabulous community.*

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### **Thank you!**

We would like to express our gratitude for all of your hard work & efforts to keep 'W' learning effectively this half term. He's really missing the social interaction but seems to be plodding on with his work in good spirits, so we are really grateful to you for keeping him motivated & enthused in his learning. The challenges of remote learning are not lost on us, particularly if you have your own families in the background doing the same.

*Received: Friday, February 12, 2021*

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### **BIG thank you**

I would like to say a BIG thank you to you all for working so hard for our children and young people. You have managed to make their experience as positive as it can be at this time. This last year has certainly been a challenging time but I have been amazed by how you have and continue to, adapt to the ever changing demands put upon you all. You have always been honest and open about the difficulties but you have not let these overwhelm you, you have always looked for, and found solutions...amazing!!! I appreciate the time and effort you are all putting in to find these solutions and to try to engage the kids in remote learning....never an easy task. I marvel at the teachers managing to maintain their motivation when faced with a sea of blank screens and minimum verbal feedback! It must be so hard, and not what any of you thought you would be doing when you signed up for teaching I'm sure!

Thank you for keeping us so well informed and for your clear summaries of the masses of information you must get on a daily basis. I personally am very pleased I am not having to read through it all and try to understand it without your guidance.

*Received: Monday, February 8, 2021*

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### **Thanks for the continued updates**

I just wanted to say thanks for the continued updates which we receive from IGS as we continue through the pandemic. We appreciate the hard work of all the staff as they continue to aim to deliver the syllabus in very unusual and often difficult times, whilst also caring for the **mental wellbeing** of our children. Its much appreciated.

*Received: Monday, February 8, 2021*

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### **Thanks**

Really impressed with the level of support and structure during this lock down and parents evening seem to run really well too. So pleased they all have **ipads**. So please pass on my thanks to the team for keeping our year 9s going. I think motivation is slipping a bit but the constant check ins are good.

Received: 04 February 2021

## **March 2021**

### **Thanks to you and your colleagues**

IGS has provided the pupils with a safe, secure and stable environment for learning throughout this recent period of the pandemic.

Much appreciated.

*Received: 26 March 2021*

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### **End of Term**

Many thanks to all the Teachers & staff who have worked so hard to make this term 'business as usual' through your outstanding remote learning provision . Hope you get chance to have a very much deserved break also!

*Received: 26 March 2021 14:55*

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### **"Seeing this work first-hand made me proud to be a resident of our wonderful town"**

*By 'Reader Letter' published in the Ilkley Gazette*

#### **READER LETTER**

I was delighted to offer my time and help this week, and indeed next week, volunteering to help Ilkley Grammar School to provide a coronavirus test to all children who attend the school in order to be able to return safely. While I was delighted to help out, the real praise for this amazing work needs to go to IGS staff, students and other volunteers who have performed amazing work to help ensure pupils can return safely to school and that the process of testing was as safe as possible and made as calm and stress-free as possible for all students.

Seeing this work first-hand made me proud to be a resident of our wonderful town and shows the amazing work being undertaken by those dedicated staff at IGS. Given the success of the work being done to get students back into school I am confident that staff will also be doing a remarkable job helping students catch up with the gaps in their learning journey that this pandemic has caused.

Kyle Green | District Councillor for Ilkley

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### **Comments received from the Covid-19 mass testing programme volunteers March 2021**

Just to say I have been very impressed with the way this whole thing has been organised, and the way it has worked so very efficiently.

I've been very glad to have played a small part in helping out. It's great to hear that all the tests so far have been negative - I'm sure everyone will have found that very reassuring.

\*\*\*\*\*

It has been a pleasure to meet so many of your students who have been very polite, pleasant and cooperative.

\*\*\*\*\*

Thank you- well done for all your hard work and I have really enjoyed working with your staff and the other volunteers!

\*\*\*\*\*

It's been a pleasure to be able to help out, and I must congratulate the staff for such a slick operation.

\*\*\*\*\*

I'm pleased the testing has all gone well, I was very impressed with your set up.

\*\*\*\*\*

I am delighted to have helped and well done on the organisation.

\*\*\*\*\*

So impressed with the organisation of your covid response. Volunteering has been a pleasure.

\*\*\*\*\*

An absolute pleasure to have helped you.

\*\*\*\*\*

Really happy to have been able to help, you and team have done a brilliant job ?

\*\*\*\*\*

It's been a pleasure helping out and the organisation has been a credit to you and all those involved.

\*\*\*\*\*

I just want to congratulate the school for organising this huge project and executing the challenge with such ease and professionalism. Well done!

I have personally benefitted from helping out more than I could have imagined or anticipated. It has allowed me to get back some self confidence, after a long period of anxiety, causing withdrawal and self isolation.

I am very grateful, thank you.

\*\*\*\*\*

What a wonderful achievement to have processed 4341 tests by Tuesday 16th and even better.....that all the tests have been negative, congratulations to you and all the IGS Testing Team.

\*\*\*\*\*

It has been my pleasure to have contributed in a small way to such a successful and positive programme.

\*\*\*\*\*

Thanks for the amazing organisation the last couple of weeks.

\*\*\*\*\*

It's been a pleasure to be involved and the students are a credit to the school.

\*\*\*\*\*

It was a pleasure - students really rose to the challenge, as always.

\*\*\*\*\*

Weren't all the children great. So polite - even when sticking the swab up their nostril!

\*\*\*\*\*

Glad to be able to help and if you need help with anything again just let me know.

\*\*\*\*\*

I really have been impressed by the whole set up.

\*\*\*\*\*

I just wanted to feedback from my assistant experience today- to say how lovely it was that every single student thanked me after their test. Great job & excellently organised,

\*\*\*\*\*

Do you need me again? Happy to volunteer whenever needed, I really enjoyed it and met so many fabulous people....adults and children. Hooray for IGS!

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Thanks again for letting me be part of the volunteers.

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### **Mass Symptomatic Testing Programme @ IGS**

We are writing, as recent volunteers, to offer our congratulations to yourselves and the Team at Ilkley Grammar School (IGS) that planned, organised and facilitated the recent Covid Mass Symptomatic Testing Programme at IGS. When a request for volunteers to assist in the Testing Programme was made by IGS we felt that as Grandparents with 3 Grandchildren already attending IGS and with 3 more Grandchildren currently attending an Ilkley Primary School that this was a request that we could offer our time to. From the initial communication by IGS, at the Training Session and throughout the 2 weeks Testing Programme we were both highly impressed by all aspects of our roles as a Volunteer Test Assistant. and Meet & Greet Assistant. IGS staff were well organised, friendly and most appreciative of our time and commitment to the Testing Programme. We felt genuinely valued! We would also like to commend the Students of IGS to you, who, without exception, were well behaved, courteous and respectful. Many students presented with excellent social and communication skills.

Suffice to say therefore that whilst we had thought that in volunteering we could offer, in these unprecedented times, something to IGS/the local community we certainly had not envisaged how interesting, enjoyable and rewarding the experience would be for ourselves!

Our congratulations, admiration and thanks to all at IGS. We hope that staff and students enjoy a well earned Easter holidays.

*Received: 21 March 2021*

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### **Very well done to everyone**

For what it's worth, thank you from us and very well done to everyone at school who organised all that testing for the kids. It all looked incredibly smooth and efficient. The school always seems extremely organised anyway, but achieving that on such a scale must have meant a huge amount of extra work for a lot of people, at short notice as well. I think it was really impressive. Further to our conversation on Friday, if you do set up any group of friends of IGS or anything similar then I'm happy to be part of it, or to be a spare pair of hands if you ever need volunteers for anything else - including science clubs!

*Received: 20 March 2021*

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### **Volunteers**

Having been socially isolated for many months, it was a complete breath of fresh air to come and volunteer at IGS. It has been an absolute pleasure and such a positive experience from start to finish. The highlights for me were being part of your highly professional and seamless operation (which had the hallmarks of military precision!) , meeting the wonderful staff and impressive students at IGS. Talking to all the students I helped with their tests was such a privilege and they left a real mark on me; their maturity, manners and stoicism shone through and it was very uplifting for me to be around their energy and great spirits. I wish I could do more and would love to volunteer again at any opportunity. Thank you everyone for a wonderful experience.

*Received: Thursday, March 18, 2021*

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### **Thank you**

Just to say thank you all for such an amazing team effort to get all the children back in to school safely. I know my children are very glad to be back with their teachers (despite the masks!) and we are all very grateful for all that you have done to achieve this.

THANK YOU!

*Received: 18 March 2021*

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### **Testing!**

I have just finished my stint as processor! Please share the following with everyone:

I joined the army of volunteers - parents, grandparents and others from our community - to help IGS with its programme of testing for asymptomatic Covid-19. First of all I thank all my fellow volunteers for their support - often on top of family and work commitments. As an army I thought we were professional and willingly supported each other and the school - so thank you everyone.

The staff at IGS were incredible. The emergency field testing station in the sports hall was set up brilliantly and run so efficiently. The staff were always on hand to support volunteers and students and the atmosphere throughout was calm and cheerful. Another example of the extra mile all the staff have put in to support our students over the last difficult months.

Last but by no means least, a thank you to the students. They were co-operative and courteous throughout - a credit to their families, the school and most of all, to themselves. Thank you everyone for making an enormous additional burden on the school such a successful exercise.

*Lindsey Wharmby, IGS Chair of Governors*

*Received: 17 March 2021*

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### **Thanks**

I just wanted to say thank you to everyone involved in supporting the pupils so brilliantly over the past year (+) during the pandemic. Like all other communication that we've received from you all it is really clear, helpful and reassuring. The efforts that all staff have gone to to give the students the best possible chances have been over and above anything that could have been expected.

Thank you!

*Received: 16 March 2021*

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### **Thank you - On-line Lessons**

I would like to send my heart-felt thanks to all staff at school over your amazing efforts this term.

I am so very grateful for the strong and dedicated approach from IGS over the on-line lessons, from the tutor meetings, the lessons themselves, the communications we have received as parents and extra ideas such as the Wednesday afternoon screen free time before half term (which my boys used as intended) and the Peter Pan day for my year 8 son. Plus all the work behind the scenes that have made the term work best it can in these extreme and trying circumstances. I've just needed to soldier on with my own work during this time, and the structure provided by IGS to ensure my boys have continued some learning has been great. For my youngest who has received a few

“non-submissions of work”, it has been really useful to have those communicated as well via Class charts, so I have been able to then make sure he has at least gone back and posted the work retrospectively. Also, whenever I have had an odd question for school, these have been answered very promptly, and in particular, when I had some concerns about my eldest son during the first lock down, I received immediate help from school. I truly believe IGS has done the absolute best it can in these exceedingly trying circumstances for its pupils. You certainly have for my sons, and I imagine there will have been a tremendous amount of hard work and dedication from all staff to achieve that.

That said, I am so happy to have them back to school now, so please let me express additional thanks for such a well organised test programme to get everyone back. I have probably taken school too much for granted in the past and I will never do that again. You have been fabulous. Thank you!

*Received: 12 March 2021*

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### **Year 9 Testing - Well Done**

I just wanted to congratulate you and your team for such efficiency in the testing process.

My son went in to be tested today. He was anxious about it (although pretending to be cool) and asked me to come with him. So I dropped him off and 5 minutes later he was back saying it was actually OK, which for a 14 year old teenager is high praise indeed.

Under impossible circumstances, you've set up a brilliant and efficient testing system and I thought that needed to be acknowledged.

Well done to you, your teachers, your admin support and your volunteers.

*Received: 10 March 2021*

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### **Many thanks**

I just wanted to pass on my sincere thanks to you all for the amazing work that you have been doing to ensure that our children continue to be schooled in the best way possible during the COVID-19 pandemic. Unexpected demand after unexpected demand have been placed on you all and the challenge has been risen to seamlessly and without complaint. I truly hope that everyone recognises the amazing work that you have been doing and that nothing is made of yesterday's inadvertent data issue. I know that the parents I am in touch with, like me, think that the testing process you have put in place in such a short space of time is remarkable and incredibly slick and have no concerns at all if information about our child's test has gone slightly astray.

*Received: 10 March 2021*

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### **Thank you**

I just want to say you are all PHENOMENAL and I sincerely hope there hasn't been a single word of criticism about this unforeseen Data event.

The way you have handled and stepped up and adapted to the relentless changes of policy and expectations of you and your staff is beyond awe inspiring. . .

Thank you, thank you, thank you for handling this last year and all it's thrown at you with the dignity, efficiency and good humour that you've to a man and woman shown.

*Received: 10 March 2021*

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### **IGS testing programme**

I have no doubt that yesterday posed challenges which were not needed for you and your team. However, I would just like to say that I am over-awed at the sterling effort which has been made to ensure that the entire Covid testing process is seamless for the children. As if the year hasn't been difficult enough for the education profession, the job of Covid testers was thrust upon you. The set up in the hall and the efficiency with which it runs is a true testimony to the dedication of your staff. No doubt that the next educational year will be easier (yet not without Covid challenges), but until then, please communicate to your staff that their effort has not gone unnoticed and unappreciated.

*Received: 10 March 2021*

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### **Thank you - Mental Health Webinar**

I wanted to let you know how grateful I was for the presentation you gave on well-being and mental health. I was so impressed by your presentation, it was one of the best webinars I had viewed and I have seen many professionally as a GP.

It is great to know that our children's mental health is so well supported by you all at school.

Thank you again for a great webinar

*Received: 01 March 2021*

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### **Thank you for all you have done**

I just thought I'd take the time, after a long few weeks, to write and thank you and your team for all you have done for [our] three children to date.

They have all presented their own challenges and, in some instances, they have not always made the life of your hard working staff easy.

And, of course, the last two years have put quite extraordinary and unreasonable pressures on all of you.

Today, [my partner] and I have been receiving photo after photo of a very, very happy pair of [children] - they look totally at home in your school and with your staff, and there was never any doubt that they would stay with you, if invited.

If those photos are not confirmation that much of what you do at IGS is hugely positive for these kids, I don't know what is.

So thank you. It matters that you are all thanked for what you do.

Received: 28 May 2021

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#### **IGS has done them proud**

I'd just like to say thank you to all the teachers who have now (or very soon!) seen our 3 children/young adults successfully through their secondary school education. I think IGS has done them proud.

I remain impressed with the positive messaging from the school throughout the last year or so in particular and firmly believe this has impacted positively on the students too as they look to their teachers as role models. I have requoted the following paragraph from the recent email because I fully agreed with it

***As I have said to our oldest students in their final remote assembly, they must challenge the negative narrative about a Covid-Generation. They are remarkable young people who will emerge with strong technical skills, enhanced levels of resilience and independence, as well as a deep appreciation of the importance of face-to-face human connection and positive, supportive friendships. I am very proud of them and hope that, whatever their next destination, they fulfil their full potential and make a positive difference through the lives they lead.***

Thank you

Received: 8 June 2021

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#### **Giving your all**

I would like to thank the staff at IGS for giving your all, in another extremely challenging year.

Thank you, it is much appreciated and I hope everyone has an enjoyable summer break.

Received: July 2021

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#### **High quality teaching throughout**

I just wanted to email to say a huge thank you to you and all of the staff at IGS for all your hard work this academic year. It has definitely been one of the more challenging years we've faced in education but all the staff have worked so hard to make sure that both [my sons] have continued to access high quality teaching throughout, as well as delivering a curriculum that has kept them engaged, and encouraged them to foster a love of learning. No mean feat in 'normal' times but certainly much harder this year!

Thank you also for arranging C and C week. [My son] has thoroughly enjoyed every minute of it and it's been a really lovely way to end the year.

Received: July 2021

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#### **Amazing work**

I just wanted to thank you all for your amazing work in such a difficult year. I feel you have done your utmost to keep our children safe and minimise the disruption to their education under challenging circumstances.

You have managed to maintain your high standards in all areas, keeping the cogs turning behind the scenes and keeping the children motivated and engaged on the front line!

We, as parents, have felt well informed every step of the way.

So huge thanks. I truly hope you get time to relax and enjoy a break this summer, you have earned it!

Received: 17 July 2021

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#### **Really enjoyed her first year**

Just want to say a HUGE thank you to all the teachers and staff at IGS and particularly those who look after year 7.

[My daughter] has really enjoyed her first year at IGS. Unfortunately she is spending her last week of term in isolation. As the children are missing the celebration week of trips and can't go anywhere, they really welcome as much interaction with those teachers left at school who are planning on line activities. [My daughter] has just logged on to 'origami making' and there are loads of children on the call. Fitness sessions would be welcomed too. Really appreciate the commitment from the teachers and just in case you thought the events weren't appreciated – they definitely are – please keep them coming – you are keeping these children going.

Received: 19 July 2021

### **Trip to Ingleton Waterfalls**

I am currently staying in Ingleton and on Monday visited the Ingleton Waterfalls. I was fortunate enough to meet a large group of your young people and their staff on the trail as they stopped for a break. I was really impressed by how polite and considerate the students were. And it was lovely to see them out enjoying the countryside, with next to no grumbles!

**Please pass on my thanks and appreciation to the staff and young people.**

*Received: 21 July 2021*

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### **So pleased we decided to choose IGS**

As a mum of a student, I'd just like to say I'm so pleased we decided to choose IGS for [our daughter] because through everything IGS staff have been amazing and the education you have provided her with has been outstanding. Thank you.

*Received: July 2021*

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### **Whole team effort**

I just wanted to pass on my thanks to all the staff for making it through a very exceptional year. With both my girls now isolating I wanted to share my appreciation.

I know working in a school, that getting through this year is a whole team effort, so thank you so much to everyone.

*Received: July 2021*

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### **Invaluable**

I would like say a BIG thank you to all members of staff for keeping the school safe and for helping [my daughter] continue with her learning both in school and, when necessary, remotely from home. You have all been invaluable through these less than normal times and [my daughter] and me are very grateful for your incredible hard work, support and dedication to all students. She has had a super (much needed and deserved) C&C week and that is thanks to you all.

*Received: 22 July 2021*

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### **Exceptional experience**

We wanted to write and pass on our gratitude for the **exceptional experience** you have given [my son] during his secondary education.

### **The teaching staff are amazing, you just understand the students, how to teach, inspire and respect their individual needs.**

We would also like to acknowledge the **work of the support and pastoral teams. . . .who were there when needed. . .**, sometimes just keeping an eye out but we always felt you are **not only looking after his education but his emotional development as well.**

Thank you again to all staff, you have been outstanding, particularly during a difficult 18 months.

We really appreciate what you have done to enable [my son] **to achieve his personal best.**

*Received: August 2021*

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### **Helped my daughter achieve her goal**

I am writing to say a huge thank you to everyone associated with IGS, who has helped [my daughter] achieve her goal of a confirmed place at the University of Cambridge.

Over the past 7 years, [my daughter] **has flourished at IGS**, developing a wide circle of friends and core group of close friends; **growing in confidence and expanding her comfort zone, through a variety of extra-curricular activities**, such as Hub Helper and Sports Leader, and participation on the French Exchange and NCS; and last, but not least, **achieving outstanding academic results at both GCSE and A level.**

My thanks go to every single person who has played their part over the last 7 years.

**IGS truly has helped [my daughter] achieve her Personal Best** and I am incredibly grateful to the staff, who work phenomenally hard in normal times to help students achieve their goals, but who really have gone even further 'above and beyond' over the past 18 months.

I wish you all the very best for the future.

*Received: August 2021*