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Dear Parents and Carers

Welcome to this week's update.

We are now fully immersed in the examination season, and I would like to thank our Year 11 and Year 13 pupils for the focus, resilience and determination they have shown. Simply turning up each day, remaining positive and giving their best deserves real credit. I hope they are able to enjoy a restful half term, balanced with some purposeful revision to help make the weeks ahead a little easier.

Last week, we were delighted to welcome the Children's Commissioner, Dame Rachel de Souza, to school. Following a tour of the building, she spent time speaking with groups of Year 10 and Year 12 pupils about her role, as well as their hopes and ambitions for the future. While she was hugely complimentary about our facilities, she was even more impressed by the articulate, thoughtful and compassionate way our pupils spoke about creating a more inclusive society. They represented the school exceptionally well.

On Monday, the PE department took a group of pupils to the Sheepmount for the annual Carlisle District Athletics Championships. A number of our pupils achieved podium finishes and have now qualified to represent the county — a tremendous achievement. Special congratulations go to Zaidyn Thomson, who channelled his inner Daniel Ståhl to win the discus competition with a throw of over 30 metres. A fantastic performance.

In the Catholic life of the school, Fr Luiz joined us last week to celebrate the Ascension Mass, and today he will return to celebrate the Year 7 Year Group Mass. Meanwhile, our Chaplain, Mrs Radcliffe, has been busy preparing and training our Youth Ministers to serve as Ministers of the Word. This forms part of a wider programme of activities and opportunities linked to Pope Leo's Year of Listening.

As we break for half term, may I take this opportunity to wish all of our families a restful and enjoyable week. The weather forecast looks glorious. Personally, I intend to spend at least some of it sitting in a darkened room watching the play-offs!

Best wishes

Mr D McArdle  
**Headteacher**