



Friday 5th June 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope my letter at the start of this half term finds you well. There has been a break in the weather unfortunately, but we are very lucky to have had such a fabulous spring to date.

I wrote to Y10 and Y12 parents at the start of the week to highlight the fact that the government had finally published the guidance for secondary schools over the half term break to support wider opening from 15 June . Now we have the guidance, we are firming up our plans for these year groups which will help us establish protocols for the whole school when the time comes to bring everyone back. I will be writing to Y10 and Y12 parents again imminently to explain the plans in more detail. We aim to target our letters so we don't over fill your inbox, but - as I have mentioned before - if parents with children in other year groups would like to be informed about what we are doing for the government's targeted cohorts, please visit our website where we publish all correspondence. This area of the website also provides a useful back catalogue of letters if you wish to find something without trawling through your emails. Y10 parents should also look out for a letter next week from Mrs Darbyshire regarding our plans for replacing the postponed parents' evening from March.

Once we have thoroughly prepared for, and implemented, some face-to-face contact with Y10 and Y12, our attention will be turning to planning for September. Mr McGreal, Assistant Headteacher, is busy writing a timetable for September that we are still unsure whether we will even require straight away. Alongside this, we will be modelling several scenarios to help us be as prepared as possible for whatever the pandemic and social distancing measures may throw at us. We are already ensuring good stock levels of hand sanitiser, soap, PPE etc as these items have long lead times at the moment. We are also exploring manufacturing our own screening in the DT department to provide staff and students with extra protection in areas such as main reception and shared offices. We will, of course, keep you up-to-date with our planning but thank you for understanding that the first couple of weeks after Boris Johnson announced wider opening of schools saw in excess of 40 updates to published guidance from the Department of Education! This makes us rather wary of committing to plans too early, before we have all of the finalised facts.

Next, a reminder to all parents. If you do have any worries or concerns relating to learning needs - recognised or suspected, you can contact us on sen@stokesleyschool.org. Further resources to support online learning for children with special educational needs can be found via this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-online-education-resources#special-educational-needs-and-disabilities-send>

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We hope that our weekly bulletins continue to give you some inspiration for things outside the curriculum that you and your son or daughter can explore together, and many thanks to those parents and students who have been in touch with additional suggestions or to show us what they've been up to. Mrs Fox has contacted you this week about The Day at Home, a fantastic daily newsletter produced during lockdown by The Day, an online newspaper to which we subscribe for your children. We think it looks like a great resource to access together as a family which, if nothing else, should spark some interesting dinner time discussions! Please refer to Mrs Fox's original email or get in touch with her directly on l.fox@stokesleyschool.org should you want more information.

Finally this week and for variety, I thought it would be nice for you to hear some brief messages directly from our Heads of Year/Head of Sixth Form which are as follows:

Head of current Year 7 and incoming Y6 - Mrs Metcalfe

"I have enjoyed supporting and working with Y7 this year and I know Mrs Bailey is already getting to know them all well! Thanks to the Y7 students who are helping me welcome the Y6 by creating some videos which will be shared soon. I know things aren't the same for transition this year, but there are lots of things going on behind the scenes which should help welcome all Y6's to our school and help them start to see themselves as part of our wonderful community!"

Head of Year 8 - Mrs Brosnan

"Over the past couple of weeks, I have been continuously proud of the engagement from Y8. I've thoroughly enjoyed photographs from VE day, showing the decorations and picnics they helped to create. I've had an amazing 42 entries of Wellbeing Colour Walks, and I cannot get over how many talented bakers we have in the year group! I'm very much looking forward to seeing each and every one of my year group as soon as I can."

Head of Year 9 - Mr Wilson

"Since the lockdown began I have been delighted with the way the students have managed to cope with the changes to their lives and their learning, They have been very disciplined with their work and have shown great maturity towards their studies. I have been impressed with the quality of work that they have produced for both their lessons and also the wellbeing activities and tasks. All of the form tutors and I are very proud of the students and look forward to seeing them again when we can."

Head of Year 10 - Mr Hamer

"The majority of students have thrown themselves into remote learning, working extremely hard in order to keep on track for GCSE success. It has been interesting to hear that some students have enjoyed this way of working, in fact would possibly wish it to continue, whilst others have found it a difficult route to follow. However, it has been pleasing to see that students have kept





in contact with teachers and tutors, sometimes for educational support, for well-being support, or even simply to chat and share some news. As well as completing their on-line work, students have been enjoying Colour Walks, taking some lovely pictures of any red items (the Y10 colour) - although, I am not sure what the public think when they see teenagers taking photos of bins, cars and front doors! They have also enjoyed (or seemed to enjoy) the weekly quiz posted on their tutor group notice board. Under these unusual circumstances, students have kept busy in different ways, such as creating amazing pieces of artwork, taking over the role of house-keeper whilst a newborn sibling has arrived and even helping to produce masks as part of PPE for the NHS. We are so proud of our students and their tenacity and efforts under such trying circumstances."

Head of outgoing Year 11 and current Y7 going into Y8 - Mrs Bailey

"It has been a real honour to have been Head of Year for the final year of Y11 students' main school education: the tutor team and I are especially proud of how the students have coped with the challenges of the last few months. Events haven't turned out as we would all have hoped, or even considered, but I hope the students are now looking towards the future and concentrating on their next steps. Please encourage the students to get in touch with me if they are not joining our sixth form, and let me know every now and again what they are up to!"

"For Y7, I am really looking forward to being the Head of Year and getting to know a new year group over the next 4 years. There will be challenges ahead, but we will face them together."

Assistant Headteacher/Head of Sixth Form - Mr Weedy

"Starting this new role as a *virtual* Head of Sixth Form has been tough: the first things you want to do are introduce yourself, put names to faces, and learn about each individual in turn. Obviously some of this has been impossible so far, and I am sure the students in KS5 have found it odd to be dealing with a new Head of Sixth Form in this manner too. Taking all of this into account, I have been utterly overwhelmed by the effort Y12 students have shown: both in contacting me, and for keeping up-to-speed with their work and the strange new world of UCAS. It's difficult to imagine a better group of students to start a new venture like this one.

Looking to the future, I'm excited to hold Head Boy/Girl interviews this half term and to start building a student team that would do any Sixth Form proud. I'm just as eager to begin arranging some Y13 leavers' awards; I promise not to show too much favouritism to my physicists!"





Have a great weekend, and do not hesitate to get in touch with any of us if you need support, guidance or just want to share some news.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs H. L. Millett
Headteacher

