



Friday 7th May 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

In the last fortnightly update, we were still hoping for the safe return of our colleague, Mr Blyth; tragically, this was not to be. We have been helped superbly over the last two weeks by charity Just B who have provided counselling services to both staff and students. I have been humbled by the messages of support from our families and by the steadfast way in which our wonderful young people and our committed staff have kept the wheels turning here: it has not been easy, but it has been done with dignity and respect. Watch this space in the future for plans we have to establish a lasting tribute to Mr Blyth in our school when the time is right.

Please read on for more information about what is happening in your school.

Attendance and Behaviour Update Y7-Y11

The attendance and behaviour of our students continues to be something we are extremely proud of. In the academic year to date, students have earned **109,429** ambition points! Attendance is outstanding at **95%** in main school (higher in the sixth form) and given the disruption that students have faced this year, we think their commitment is commendable. We regularly remind our students that to be the best they can be, they must be in school, that is the starting point for everything they achieve here. **335 of our students have 100%** attendance for the year to date, **704 students have attendance over 97%**! For context, we currently have just under 1000 students in Y7-11.

Our students tell us time and again that they enjoy learning in classes free from disruption, where they can simply get on. We operate a step system in classes for behaviour management, like many other schools, and we have recently combined behaviour points accrued in lessons with behaviour points for lack of punctuality to streamline our sanctions in school. Students have this week been informed that where they accrue 6 or more behaviour points in a week, they will trigger a process of break time detentions (Social Time Exclusion), after school detentions and parental meetings. We have explained to students that the vast majority of students will never go through this process of sanctions (the average number of behaviour points per student for the entire year is 7), however, we have reminded them that our behaviour systems are in place to ensure that they can learn in uninterrupted lessons, where everyone can be the best that they can be.

Awarding Grades for Y11 and Y13 ... and more

Last week, Mrs Darbyshire wrote to you with the information you need regarding our TAG's process for students who would have taken examinations this summer. This incorporated information about how our students will be assessed, what evidence we will be using, our process of awarding TAG's, information on reasonable adjustments, regulations, and our malpractice and our appeals process. Today, students in Year 11 and Y13 have been issued with a letter about special considerations. Please read this information with your son / daughter and ensure they have completed the attached google form by 12 noon on Friday 14th May 2021.



In addition to this, Mrs Darbyshire, Mr Hamer and Mr Weedy have presented students with an assembly telling them a little bit about the exciting, Covid safe ways in which we plan to celebrate the end of such a tumultuous year. This was an exciting taster for students who continue to work so hard on their ongoing assessments. With just over three weeks to go, thank you for supporting your sons and daughters to continue to revise and work hard right up to Friday 28th May.

Sixth Form Updates

Y11

For our incoming Y12 cohort in September, please keep an eye out for an offer postcard which should be dropping onto your doorsteps next week; provided your son / daughter applied to our sixth form, that is! We hope that these will provide that little bit of extra inspiration to keep our year 11 students at the top of their game throughout the rest of this half term. We *still* have a few late applications coming through, so please don't think the ship has sailed if you've had a change of heart!

Y12

Y12 have assessments coming up at the end of this half term, and they are important for numerous reasons. Firstly, the year group did not have the opportunity to sit their GCSEs last year, so exam-hall experience has been limited; this assessment period poses a challenge that I'm confident they will take head-on. Secondly, the grades they attain during these assessments will go some way in determining their predicted grades we give to universities. I must stress that predicted grades are not *solely* based on these assessments - other factors from the past, present and future will also play their part - but they will certainly carry a lot of weight. Y12's appropriate use of study periods is absolutely vital in the coming weeks.

Y13

Mr Weedy says: "I cannot express in words how proud I have been of our year 13 students recently - but I'm certainly going to try! Their attitude to what has been an incredibly difficult year has been nothing short of inspirational, and they have taken so much in their stride that many others would have struggled with. Would I wish for this year to have been different, and that exams had gone ahead as normal? **Absolutely**. Would I change the students I have worked alongside, with all of their skills, their qualities, their dreams? **Not for the world**. Stokesley Sixth Form will undoubtedly be a poorer place without them around. We hope that some of the optional activities we have on offer after half term - including some exciting university-style lectures, one delivered by yours truly - will entice some of our year 13 leavers to remain involved with us for a little bit longer. I know that I and many others would love to see them again before the summer."





SEN and Ethos updates

As we approach the end of the year 11 assessment period, the SEN and Ethos team are excited to turn our attention to the future. We are looking forward to supporting our Year 11 students as they prepare to take their next steps. If you would like to receive information about independent study skills and preparing for further education, please contact your named worker in the SEN team.

We have had a number of conversations regarding the transition of our new Year 7 intake with the SEN teams at our feeder primaries and even had some students join us for an after school visit with their parents (socially distanced of course).

Over the next few weeks, we will be assessing our year 9 students for exams access arrangements to ensure any recommendations are in place for the start of their GCSE courses. Students have been identified to us for testing by their class teachers, we will seek permission from parents and carers to complete these assessments and inform you of the outcome.

PTA Uniform Event / donations

The PTA will be holding a termly uniform event to provide parents with the opportunity to purchase pre-loved uniform items at great savings and to save good quality uniforms going to landfill.

As always, we welcome donations of items in good condition which can be left at reception or passed onto your child's tutor (blazers, trousers, skirts, school shoes, PE kit incl football boots, no school shirts please). We particularly appeal to our Year 11 leavers who can bring bagged items to the bridging days or the celebration event. We would also be grateful for any scientific calculators that will no longer be required for further education.

The next event is *Thursday 27th May 3.30pm - 4.30pm* and due to ongoing covid restrictions will be on a first come first served appointment basis. To book an appointment please contact our Education Welfare Officer Miss Poole at j.poole@stokesleyschool.org.

Year 8 into 9 personalised options

Don't forget to check out our options website at www.stokesleyoptions.co.uk for the information about each of the courses on offer for Y9, including a short video from each subject leader. Remember, the students need to pick their top 3 options, plus a reserve, and to choose which language is their preferred choice for year 9. The deadline for entering the choices via www.sims-options.co.uk is Wednesday 12th May. If you have any issues please contact either your son / daughter's form tutor or Mr McGreal, Assistant Headteacher, via r.mcgreal@stokesleyschool.org.





Dates for your diaries

Y11 Celebration Event - Monday 21st June and Y13 Celebration Event - Tuesday 22nd June. More detailed information will follow in due course.

Friday 28th May - Official leaving date for Y11 and Y13 and the last day of the half term for all other students. School finishes at 3.25pm. Please note there will be a programme of events for Y11 and Y13 to engage with for four weeks after half term should they wish - again, more details to follow very soon.

Yours faithfully

Mrs H. L. Millett
Headteacher