

Friday, 04 September 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

We are delighted to be able to welcome back all our students and we have welcomed a number of new staff to the school as well as our new Year 7 who missed out on all the usual transition activities in the summer.

It has certainly been an interesting summer with what might happen next in the world of education as unpredictable as the weather. What is important now though is having all our students and staff back with an absolute focus on learning so that, as I frequently say, we can achieve the best we can and become the best we can be.

I remind you that Mr Long is covering Year 8 as Head of Year and Mrs Beesley is now Head of Year for Year 11.

Covid measures

I have said in assemblies this week that all the new expectations and routines in relation to Covid 19 are a means to an end so that we can get on with teaching and learning. They may take a bit of getting used to but they are important so that we can keep everyone safe and healthy as far as possible. They are also something that we will refine and improve as we go along and I will update the plan and keep the new version on the website so that you always have access to it. As part of our new routines and expectations could I please remind you:

- Students are expected to wear face coverings when travelling on the bus
- Students need to have money on their accounts and cannot use the cash reval machines in school
- Please contact school if you are having any difficulty with online payments
- Students need to bring plenty of water to school as we cannot currently use the water fountains
- Not to come on to the school site in cars but drop students off in the vicinity of school
- Not to come into reception. Any meetings will need to be pre-planned and done remotely
- Students need to have their equipment with them every day. This is a school expectation but even more important now as we cannot share equipment
- For the first two weeks at least students may come in PE kit on the day they have PE. After that, with smaller PE groups and having gone through the sanitising regime we hope to return to using changing rooms
- We will not be able to hold our annual Open Evening or Information Evenings in the usual way but we will use alternative means of communicating all necessary information and will keep you informed about those

There has been a rumour going round social media in parts of Lancashire that where a school suspects a case of Covid, the child will be taken out of school and tested without parental knowledge. I can assure you that this is not the case. If there are concerns around someone having symptoms you will be asked to collect your child and take them for a test and they should only return when symptom free after a negative test result. If they test positive they should isolate for 10 days and the rest of the family for 14 days.

Please do not send your child to school if they are displaying any of the Covid symptoms but get them tested.

Results 2020

Year 11 results are now available on the website and I believe an accurate reflection of what they would have achieved in an exam – that was the purpose of Centre Assessed Grades and we took that very seriously. I am delighted at the outcomes our students achieved and the progress made as a school in some key areas. There will not be any published national data on progress 8 measures this year.

The school fabric

Over the summer we have created a new PE studio for aerobics, yoga and similar activities and within the next couple of weeks our new Multi Use Games Area with artificial pitch will be completed. A huge amount of work has been done on decorating the school and we have renewed 2 IT suites as well as upgrading a lot of other IT equipment.

Looking forward

I would just simply say to all students that they should focus on learning and make every day count. It is our job as staff to identify and address gaps in learning and we will do that through a programme of catch up activities. No student should be worried about time missed in school– everyone is in the same situation. We do also have plans for the continuation of learning should there ever be need to close the school to a group of students in the future (which of course we hope does not happen).

Arrangements for next summer's exams are still not finalised by the Government and Ofqual although there is a lot of chatter and speculation in the media. Year 11 should concentrate on the learning that needs to be done every day and Mrs Beesley and Miss Wareing will share information with you about Year 11 in the coming week.

With best wishes

Andrew Waller

Headteacher