



SEAHAM HIGH SCHOOL

Engaging minds, broadening horizons

Seaham High School
Station Road
Seaham
Co. Durham
SR7 0BH

01915161600

Head Teacher: Mr G.W Lumsdon

Deputy Head: Mrs A Carr
Deputy Head: Mr J.E Henderson

22nd June 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

I am writing to update you with regards to the wider re-opening of the school. As we were particularly pleased with our on-line uptake especially in Year 10 we opted to meet the Governments request for "face to face contact with Year 10" by adopting a mentoring approach. We are now a week into this and it has been received largely positively. Our Bubble system for those Year 10 students who need to use our facilities began today and although early days, again this has gone quite well. The main priority of making the school as safe as we can for students and staff I believe has been achieved although we will continually review our procedures.

The Government announced its intention on Friday that all pupils in all year groups will return in September, which I am delighted about as I for one would like to get back to some semblance of normality. What was not clear was whether this would involve a return to full time education in school for all pupils in all year groups. The Education Secretary announced that further guidance on how that will happen will come within the next few weeks. When I get more clarity and then agreement from Governors on how to proceed I will inform yourselves.

We have also had very eye catching headlines of £1billion extra funding for catch up and private tuition. Again we have no idea how this will work or what sort of funds will be made available within our school at this time. As I get it and formulate plans with staff and Governors I will make you aware of our intentions but please bear with us as this takes time. What I will say is that we received notification today that our annual Year 7 catch up funding is being withdrawn and in part replaced by this national catch up funding.

We welcome the news that the FSM voucher scheme is being extended into the summer holidays. I am led to believe that it is possible to download and process all vouchers in one block, which if that is the case we will endeavour to do prior to the holiday period. Please be aware of the expiry date on the vouchers- the time limit has reduced.

Hopefully, you will be noticing a marked increase in "live" online lessons. Until recently we have largely focused these around Year 10 but given concerns that this disruption may continue to some extent into the Autumn term we have put extra training and focus into widening these out to more students. These seem to be well received by students and hopefully will be of great benefit. I must make clear though our expectations for behaviour in these sessions. Disruption or inappropriate behaviour is not wanted and will simply spoil it for others. I have asked staff to report any concerns and if necessary further action will be taken. Staff are putting these sessions on for the benefit of all students, most of whom welcome them. There will often be other staff also attending the session to support the teacher. I would also ask parents to not get involved or participate in these sessions in any way as that would



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not be appropriate. If you have any questions or concerns about these sessions, please contact your child's Year Achievement Leader. If parents do not wish their child to participate in these sessions that is fine but I will make clear that our staff are following guidance and protocols from ourselves and their Unions. In order for parents/carers to have a full awareness of when live lessons will be happening and to avoid any potential clashes between teachers delivering sessions we have developed a Y7-9 virtual lesson timetable. This will be accessible via the school website from Thursday. Year ten students should continue to follow their regular school timetable and live lessons will be hosted when they would ordinarily be in lesson. **Please note that students will be invited to lessons via their school email account and so it is essential that they are checking this on a daily basis.**

I will stress again the importance of keeping your child engaged with our provision. The vast majority of students are involved and working. Their work, like my children's may well not take as long as it would have done in school, however the importance of routine and purpose are as vital as the work they are completing. It is easy to lose motivation and the determination to maintain focus. This is where the role of the parent becomes paramount - you must encourage, motivate, support and if necessary put sanctions in place to ensure your child remains committed to their work and learning. We have lots that we are planning for when we return to school but catching up from this length of absence is not easy and it will leave some children struggling to keep up with their peers if they have not been engaged with their work.

I need to thank all staff for their efforts in maintaining links with parents and students in order to provide a continuity of education. However, today I want to pay a special thanks and make everyone aware of the fantastic work and effort put in by our Finance team, Facilities Manager, Site staff and cleaning staff who are working so hard to ensure the school is painted throughout, cleaning is of the highest standard, new equipment sourced and purchased to ensure the school is as safe as we can possibly make it for us all to study and work in.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

Mr G.W. Lumsdon
Head Teacher



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