

SCA/BDA

11th September 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

I am writing to you at the end of the first full week just to give you an update as to how the opening has gone so far. The students have had a superb first week and I have enjoyed going around lessons and welcoming them back to the school. Behaviour has been good and students have thrown themselves back into their work and are putting effort into their studies. I have been impressed with their mature attitude and how they are conducting themselves when facing such uncertain times.

I am pleased to say that attendance has been good this week. Some schools around the country have been reporting that attendance has been around the 80% mark but ours is 94%. This is better than had been initially predicted.

The processes that we have in school in response to the crisis are working well. Students are following the one way system sensibly, all students are wearing masks when they move around communal areas and I am pleased with social arrangements in that we are keeping all year groups separate. In terms of masks I would like parent support in one matter. We are handing out disposable masks to all students who have forgotten them or do not have a mask. However, we needed to hand out over 150 masks this week. Please could you provide a mask for your son/daughter if at all possible and check that they have one on their person before they leave the house in the morning. This would help us tremendously.

On another issue, I would like to respond to a couple of concerns parents have had with regards to students sitting next to each other in class. Due to the fact that the DfE and the government had instructed all students to return full time and that no rotas would be in place, every secondary school in England have had to cope with full classes. Therefore, every secondary school will have students from the same year group sitting next to each other in class. However, strict seating plans are being kept so we know exactly who has been in close contact with each other. This means that if there are any confirmed cases Track and Trace becomes simple. Moreover, students sanitise their hands when they enter and leave every classroom. Public Health are happy that secondary schools do this as a measure.

There have been no confirmed cases at our school so far this year. However, you will be aware reading local media that cases have been springing up in schools around the north east. As we progress through the coming weeks and society and the work environment opens back up, it is very likely all schools at some point will see some cases. However, I want to reassure parents

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that I have been working particularly hard with Public Health England and we have a robust process in place which follows their clear guidance if a case is detected in our school. Just to let you know that if there was a confirmed case at the school I would write to parents/carers straight away.

In light of recent events we have decided that it is important to teach students how to work more effectively at home and Frog, our VLE, will be used to set homework from now on. All students did an induction last week where they logged on and completed some work for their form tutor. This means that we know, and now you do, that they can operate the system effectively. It is important that this work is completed regularly and on time. They were also shown how to operate their school email address which is vital in terms of staying in touch with staff. It would be a great idea to ask your child to show you the Frog platform and keep a copy of their log in details at home so that you can further support them in their endeavours.

So I would like to finish off by reiterating that I have been delighted with the first full week back at school and am pleased that students and staff are in good spirits. Can I thank you for your continued support for the school and wish you an enjoyable weekend.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Campbell', written in a cursive style.

Steve Campbell
Principal