



HERMITAGE ACADEMY

Dear Parents/Carers,

As we embark on the summer term it does feel a little like the 'great unknown' to us all!

We know very little at this point of how and when school will resume, but please be assured we are planning for all eventualities.

We are looking closely at how to manage the curriculum for current Years 10 and 12, as they approach the end of their Key Stage 4 and 5 studies; and we are also reviewing how we prepare the incoming Year 7 for life in secondary school.

All staff are engaged in preparing lessons and delivering those via ClassCharts and also Microsoft Teams for older students. They are also talking to all of our students at least once every two weeks. We also remain open for certain groups of students. We are very much looking forwards to returning to something that resembles some normality.

As with all schools, we have had many challenges with the voucher systems and this is now getting better. Please read very carefully, the accompanying information regarding registering for free school meals (currently vouchers) if your family circumstances have changed. If they have changed, then we would also be able to issue pupils in Years 7 - 10 with vouchers towards the new school uniform for September 2020.

We have a number of evenings planned, as you know, for trying on, ordering or purchasing uniform. These remain in place, if we are able to open by any of those dates. We did ask Emblematic at the very start of the lockdown, if we could have two days in the first week of the summer holidays (Tuesday 21st and Wednesday 22nd July) where they would be onsite for the whole day and into the evening. We did not know at the time if this was going to be needed but we are glad, at least, that we have some alternatives. It is possible to order uniform, but sometimes, there is no substitute to trying on – especially as children grow very fast!

We know that for many students, they are enjoying most lessons and for others, it is hard to do this alone. Some are finding work too easy and others too hard. We are trying our best to adapt to meet students' needs, but this is also very difficult for teachers when they cannot see the children and talk with them. Please do keep us posted in the calls, on how things are going. The Hermitage Academy website and Facebook page are perfect ways to keep up to date with events and activities, so please do check these out. Mrs Howe, our Head of Pastoral Care, is regularly signposting useful information, especially relating to maintaining well-being and mental health.

We know some teenagers are struggling to engage with online learning and some have found using BBC Bite Size daily lessons useful, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/group/p089nk5f> including watching Sir David Attenborough teaching Geography. These have helped them to get back into a steady routine.

Concerning times of the day, we have always said that we want to move to one lunchtime. Our plans were to make this change during the summer months. This would enable more extra-curricular activities to take place over lunchtime. The music and PE departments, especially, are very keen for this to take place. However, given the current situation we will not make this change yet, as it would increase the traffic in corridors and the dining areas. We are just going to have to wait and see what happens over the coming months.

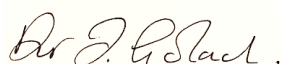
Thank you for those who have addressed questions / queries to: enquiries@hermitageacademy.co.uk. These have then been directed to the most appropriate person. We are grateful that parents have not emailed teachers directly, as the email traffic at the moment is overwhelming.

Any enquiries regarding online learning and difficulties with access, have been overseen by Mr Duggan who has manned the helpdesk emails for each year group. These are:

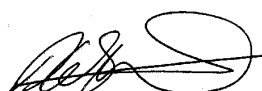
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Years 7, 9 and 12 took part in assessments just before the school closed. Many pupils were not in school for all of them. However, we do feel that we should send the results to you, even though they may be incomplete. We will not be asking students to take part in any more formal assessments this academic year, as when we do return, we must focus on the curriculum and new learning. Teachers will review learning as a regular part of each lesson. Heads of Department are looking carefully at the curriculum so that we are able to move forwards quickly and carefully once we return.

Stay safe, take care and best wishes from,



Dr J G. Slack
Deputy Chief Executive Officer



Mr D Stewart
Head of School