

Year 8 and Year 9 Parental Communication

25th June 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian

As we end this most unprecedented year, I want to thank you as parents for working tirelessly in supporting your child with the demands of home schooling. I do not underestimate the many challenges school closure has placed on parents and their children as we all adapted to the 'new normal'. Several weeks ago, we sought pupil and parental views on your experience of home schooling using google classroom. I have evaluated the findings and coupled with feedback from our teaching staff, this has informed our future planning arrangements.

As we plan for August, I am looking forward to welcoming everyone back to our school community, however, based on guidance provided by the Department of Education and The Public Health Agency, we need to ensure that our 'Restart' procedures adhere to the stipulated guidance. In light of this, I have outlined below the measures in place for 'Restart', which I hope will address and clarify any queries you may have.

Teaching and Learning Arrangements for Term One

Given the fluid nature of government advice regarding school restart, Sperrin College have firm plans in place for a number of possible scenario's which are based on advice from The Department of Education, The Public Health Agency and the Chief Medical Officer. The plans include a 'blended approach' to learning, with one week of face to face contact teaching and one- week remote online learning or normal full teaching for all pupils. I will write to all parents in early August to confirm the specific operational and teaching arrangements. These will be determined by medical and Departmental advice available in August.

Banding Structure

Regardless of the model used for teaching and learning, no child will be moved banded group in August. When normal teaching and learning resumes, consideration maybe given to band changes following the Christmas Assessments.

Health and Safety Measures, Covid -19 Secure Hygiene 'The New Normal'

All children and staff at Sperrin College will be required to adhere to strict hygiene protocols, ensuring the safety of all members of our school community. I have enclosed a leaflet with the Key safety measures, which I would ask you to read with your child. Additional video guides will be posted on the school website which can be viewed to help all pupils familiarise themselves with the procedures.

Induction and School Calendar (Provisional, subject to change)

I have enclosed a copy of the school calendar for the incoming academic year, which includes induction sessions for every year group. Our aim is to reconnect with all our pupils over the course of the week beginning Monday 24 August.

- Year 12 and Year 14 pupils will be required in school full time this week. This is to ensure pupils are fully up to date with work required for GCSE and A Level.
- All other year groups will have an induction session in either a morning or afternoon slot.
- Parents are required to organise transport for their child both to and from school.
- The purpose of the induction sessions is to support pupil knowledge and understanding with the 'new normal' procedures, focus on wellbeing issues and address gaps in learning.

School Transport

The school have not yet received any guidance on school transport arrangements for 2020 - 2021. Parents are required to apply online at www.eani.org.uk to ascertain eligibility for transport assistance.

Parent Pay and School Charges

From August 2020, the school will be introducing a new way for parents to pay for school meals and other charges. It is hoped that this 'cashless system' will provide additional protection from infection. I have enclosed a letter regarding the new system, known as 'Parent Pay'. The school will require prior parental consent, when received, your individual account will be activated. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, we are not running practical activities in the new term in Home Economics or Design and Technology, therefore, we are not collecting the practical subject fee at the moment, however, when practical activities resume, I will write to inform you when these payments will be required. There are other school charges which are outline of overleaf. Parents are advised to pay the school fees before 24th August, either by cheque or using your Parent Pay account.

Pastoral Message

In the absence of a formal academic report, there is a short Pastoral message enclosed from your child's form teacher. In addition, you can view a message from each Head of Year to your child, which is available on the school's Facebook page.

Once again, I want to thank you for all your help and support across the academic year and I will write again in August with our plans for the new term.

Yours Sincerely

B A Heron
Principal
B.Ed. (Hons)PQH(NI)M.Ed.

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