

VERULAM VOICE

Issue 36 - 3rd July 2020

Return to School in September

I am pleased that the government published their guidance for the full opening of schools in September yesterday. We are undertaking detailed planning to ensure that we can deliver a broad and balanced curriculum whilst ensuring the safety of students and staff.

We hope to publish our plans before the end of term. We will also publish a full risk assessment in August.

I have summarised the key elements of their guidance below:

- All students are expected to return to school
- Minimise the number of contacts that a student has during the school day.
- Carry out full health and safety risk assessments.
- Reducing contact by:
 - grouping children together
 - avoiding contact between groups
 - forward facing classrooms
 - whilst staff maintain distance from students and other staff
- Ensure regular hand cleaning and enhanced cleaning
- Aim to keep movement around the school to a minimum and maintain social distancing where possible
- Avoid large gatherings such as assemblies.
- Update behaviour policy to take into account rules needed for the changes.
- Focus on pastoral care/mental health.
- Prepare high quality remote learning in case of further lockdown
- Follow government guidance in the event of an outbreak of disease.

The guidance means that there will be some changes to the way the school operates and to interaction in the classroom. However, our experience of teaching Years 10 and 12 this term has given us good preparation for meeting these challenges. In September we will aim to ensure that your son or daughter continues on his or her journey towards:

Excellence: *Academic, Cultural and Sporting Character: Collaboration, Resilience and Kindness*

Respect: *For Oneself and for Others*

A link to the Government's guidance is below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

YCH Young Peoples' Survey 2020

YCH are undertaking a survey with young people about their experience of Covid-19- lockdown; they would appreciate our help in promoting it to our students and parents.

Here is the link to the survey page:

<https://www.ychertfordshire.org/about-ychertfordshire/news/young-people-s-survey-tell-us-how-the-covid-19-lockdown-has-affected-you/>

Headmaster's Commendations

This week's HM commendations go to:

Myles O'Connor, Alex Johnstone, Harvey Simmons, Cameron Dunn and Charlie McDonald who have all worked really well in RE during lockdown and are an example to others for their efforts.

Jonny Wilding, Luke Ahmed, Greg Pomeroy, and Vinny Clark for consistently delivering work to a very high standard.

Jean Esterhuysen, Charlie Taylor, Hiram Nisari, Elliot Johnson and Rudy Ashenden for their continued outstanding work, focus and dedication to RS. I look forward to getting their work each week because they never fail to impress.

P A Ramsey

PTA Second Hand Uniform Sale

A second hand uniform sale will take place next **Saturday 11th July** in the dining hall.

Timings for this and social distancing guidance will be sent via Parentmail and our Verulam Facebook page during next week.

If you have any questions regarding this, please contact Reception on 01727 766100.

GCSE and A-Level Information for Year 10, 11 and 13

Mr Freakley will be writing to all parents and students with information about A-Level and GCSE results days (A-Level - Thursday 13th August and GCSE - Thursday 20th August) before the end of term. However, I thought both students and parents would be interested to learn about the arrangements that have been put in place for both appeals and re-take examinations in the Autumn.

Ofqual made the following announcement this week:

“Students will be awarded calculated grades in GCSEs, AS and A levels this summer, giving them the opportunity to move on to further study or employment, despite the cancellation of exams. Students will be able to appeal – through their school or college – if they believe the process this summer was not followed correctly in their case; and centres themselves can appeal if they believe something systemic has gone wrong in relation to their results. Any student unable to receive a calculated result, and others who would like to improve their grades will have an opportunity to take the full suite of GCSE, AS and A level exams in the autumn.”

Appeals

In practical terms this means that in most cases, there will no official mechanism for students to appeal directly to the exam board if they are unhappy with their grade.

- Centres can appeal if they believe something systemic has gone wrong in relation to their results.
- Students will be able to appeal – *through their school or college* – if they believe **the process** this summer was not followed correctly in their case
- If students or others have concerns about bias, discrimination or any other factor that suggests that a centre did not behave with care or integrity when determining the centre assessment grade and/or rank order information they should normally raise these concerns with their centre, in the first instance.
- There will be provision for students to raise concerns directly to the exam board where there is evidence of serious malpractice on the part of the centre, which exam boards will be expected to investigate.
- Ofqual plans to make information and a helpline available to students and parents. This has not yet been published.

Autumn Exam Series

Instead of the traditional appeal system students will have the opportunity to re-sit the examination. The exact timing of the exams is yet to be confirmed but it is planned that:

- AS and A levels to be held in October
- GCSEs in November.
- Grades will be based on exam performance alone, with no non-exam assessment (NEA) counting apart from Science PAGS and English Language Speaking and Listening grades which will be carried forward.
- Only students entered for the summer examinations may sit re-sit examinations
- The normal appeal and review of marking systems will apply to the autumn exam series.

Full details can be found at the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/ofqual-publishes-more-details-on-appeals-and-confirms-autumn-exam-arrangements>

Project Submission

All projects are to be submitted via email as an attachment. Email addresses for submission are included with each project, they all follow the same format, simply change the subject name and follow:

SUBJECTproject@verulam.herts.sch.uk i.e. Artproject@verulam.herts.sch.uk

When submitting, students should submit their work via email using the following format in the 'subject line'

Name – Subject – Year Group and Tutor Group i.e John Smith – Art – Year 7H

It is important that emails are sent to the correct email address and use the format above for the subject line, otherwise we can't guarantee that it will get to the correct member of staff.

*Mr M Emsley
Assistant Headteacher*

Year 7 Race To The Lakes

Over the past two weeks, Year 7 set themselves the challenge of covering the 460km from school to Derwent Water, where they should have been staying during the famous Year 7 Lakes Trip.

Hopefully, this trip will be rescheduled for later this year, however Year 7 did not let missing out on this experience get them down. Instead, they rose to the challenge and covered a total of 1753km though walking, running or cycling. They then uploaded their achievements onto a Google Form where their contributions were added together.

The winning Form who covered the 460km reaching Derwent Water virtually in the quickest time was 7Y. Amazing effort from the whole Year Group - well done!

