

December 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

The term seems to have flown by and we are getting ready for our two week Christmas break.

Once again, can I say what a privilege it is to work with your sons and daughters. We have had an unusual year with CV19 however the start of this term has been very settled, calm and everyone is focused on work in the Academy. I am particularly pleased with the positive attitudes displayed by all of our students and the drive they exhibit towards improving their own performance. Our new policies regarding homework, learning, testing, knowledge organisers etc. are really beginning to be embedded. Thank you for your support during these extremely challenging times. Indications suggest that after Christmas could be challenging for schools with CV19 cases and staff absences. So far, as a school we have been very lucky to be able to continue to remain open for all year groups and continue to offer such a good standard of education, with virtually all staff in full time.

### Leaving CVEA

Many of you will know that I had planned to retire in the summer but stayed on at the request of the Governing Body in order to get the school up and running after the national lockdown. I intend to retire on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020 so will be leaving the school as Principal at the end of this term. The Governing Body have appointed Mrs Jo Owens (currently one of our Vice Principals) into the post of Head of the School. Mrs Owens will take over formally from 1<sup>st</sup> January and is currently shadowing me until the end of term. I will be returning, very much in the back ground, to support Mrs Owens and the Governing Body two days a week from mid-January. This will ensure a smooth transition for the school. I will write to you again in the last week of term with further details.

### Christmas activities

Due to CV19 our usual activities have had to be adjusted but we really want to provide a 'Christmas Cheer' last week and particularly the last day. To plan this (it is a secret at the moment for the students) we will need to make some changes to the last day. To fit in all the activities and lunch into the year group bubbles we intend to change the day and have a Christmas Brunch at the times below. This will allow us all to go back to form classes to have all the activities across the tannoy and within the zones. We will do our best to give the students a great day – they deserve it. It has been a tough time for them all. The brunch will be at the following times. We will do a breakfast hot menu with veggie options as well. The last day will also be 'Christmas Jumper day', tinsel, Christmas earrings all allowed!

### Brunch from 09.50

Year 7	09.50-10.10
Year 8	10.15-10.35
Year 9	10.40-11.00
Year 10	11.05-11.25
Year 11	11.30-11.50

Period 1	08.50-09.50
Period 2	09.50-10.40
Period 3	10.40-11.50
Form Period	11.50-13.30

School dismissal will be staggered at the same times give or take a few minutes whilst we finish the games etc.

### Newsletter extra-curricular update:

In the lead up to the end of the second National Lockdown, we have been regularly reviewing how and when to get our extensive extra-curricular provision operational again. We have taken the decision to begin all extra-curricular activities from Monday 11th January in the New Year except for our combined cadet force which will resume from Tuesday 8th December. This decision wasn't taken lightly, as we fully understand the importance of all aspects of our extra-curricular provision and the positive impact it has on our students. However, given the proximity to the Christmas holidays we felt obliged to ensure we minimise any additional risks that could jeopardise our school community enjoying a Christmas with their families. In the meantime, the PE department have come up with some virtual sports and fitness initiatives for all staff, students and families to get involved with. These include our 12 days of Christmas workout and our Step Up to Christmas challenge. Information about these events has been emailed to all parents and posted on class charts for students. In less than two days as a school community we have achieved over one million steps which is an incredible achievement by everyone.

### Sunderland Foodbank / supporting our Community

We would like to thank all of the members of our Academy community - students, parents, staff and governors - who have, once again, generously donated to our foodbank appeal. Last year we delivered over 700 kilograms of food (equivalent to 95 food parcels) to the foodbank in Sunderland.

We would also like to thank Northumbria Water, our Academy sponsor, and Fusion PR (UK) Limited who have provided fantastic festive hampers which will be donated to members of our local community.

### Zones/Bubbles

We will continue with the current bubbles in each school zone after Christmas. WE may adjust Year 9 slightly in order to free up the Technology specialist rooms so that all students can begin to experience some of the practical parts of the curriculum. We will write to you with an update at the beginning of the New Year.

### Toilets

Students have access to a set of toilets, based on their year group. They are able to access these toilets at lunch time and, with the permission of their class teacher, at other times during the day. There will a managed break at 13.45 for Year 7s to use the toilet.

### Uniform during CV19

The standard of uniform inside the Academy is exceptionally high. We do however insist that all students follow the uniform rules. Trousers for girls: must not be stretch, legging type, clingy trousers, no black jeans. Black shoes that can be polished MUST be worn. Boots can be worn under trousers and they must look like black shoes that can be polished but only in the winter period from November to February. Students cannot have trousers tucked into them.

Plimsolls of any description are NOT allowed. We have attached a helpful guide to permitted footwear on our website. It is our policy to attempt to contact home immediately for permission to either send students home to get changed or for parents to bring to us the correct uniform in order to avoid your child being challenged over uniform throughout the day.



Our standards and expectations of uniform and behaviour are very high and they cannot be compromised. WE have allowed a plain black jumper or top during the colder months whilst we are in the CV19 situation and we have to have doors and windows open for ventilation. Hoodie tops are NOT allowed inside the building and classrooms. Students can wear their black PE zip up top if they wish to.

### Snow Plan

The use of our new App messaging service has greatly improved our communication with parents. We have reviewed our snow procedures due to CV19 and would like to operate the following from the date of this letter.

- 6.30am A decision will be taken to close or open the Academy
- 7.00am The Academy will send out a message text and e mail to all parents who have signed up for the service. Local radio stations will also be informed.
- 8.00am If we are open the gates will be opened and all students will be brought immediately into the Academy to avoid any health and safety risks via the main entrance. During CV19 restrictions they will continue to walk in via their bubble corridors.

In times of heavy snow, we propose to dismiss Year 7 and Year 8 students about 15 minutes earlier than the normal time and Year 9 approximately 10 minutes earlier. This will give parent /carers more time to park on the surrounding streets. Year 10 and Year 11 will leave at our normal finish times. Any student who needs to wait for an older sibling can do so in the main reception area. Hopefully, this will address any health and safety issues and ensure all students have a safe exit from school. If there are any problems with this please contact us.

We hope you have a lovely safe and CV19 secure Christmas. If you need to advise us of any positive tests or illness over the two week break please use the enquiries e mail on our website and we will pick that up over the holidays. I have sent out the Government guidance for Tier 3 and we have posters up in school.

Yours faithfully



Mrs J S Bridges OBE  
Principal

