



19 June 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

I hope this letter finds you and your family well. As we complete the third week of this final half term of the academic year, I am writing with some updates.

The wider reopening of school

It has been really lovely to have our year 6s back over the past few weeks, along with (but separate from) the children of critical workers and those deemed vulnerable. All children have responded very well to our new arrangements – small groupings, social distancing and additional hygiene measures – and are clearly enjoying seeing teachers and friends.

The Government originally had the ambition that pupils across all primary year groups would be able to return to school for the final four weeks of term. They subsequently revised their thinking and clarified that this would no longer be possible. However, they have given licence to schools to welcome back additional pupils, with the caveats that this can only happen:

- after priority has been given to children of critical workers, those deemed vulnerable and those in reception and years 1 and 6, and
- if the strict measures they have stipulated around distancing and limiting mixing can be adhered to.

With this in mind, we are hopeful that we will be able to invite all our year 5s, 7s and 8s back into school for at least one opportunity to be with us and some of their peers before the holidays. To help us determine if this will be possible, Mr Watters has contacted year 6 parents of children who have not returned to school thus far, to ask whether you intend for your child to be back before the end of term. If you can let us know by completing this [survey](#) by midday on Monday 22 June, that would be appreciated. We would love to see your child back where possible. If you are uncertain and would like to talk any doubts through with us, please do get in touch. Parents of children in year 6 already attending school do not need to complete the survey.

Free school meals

We are continuing to issue a weekly £15 voucher using the national scheme administered by Edenred for each student eligible for free school meals but not attending school to receive their meal. You may also have heard this week that the government announced that schools will be able to issue a voucher, using the Edenred scheme, to cover the six-week summer holiday period.

We know that financial circumstances have changed for a number of our families in recent months. If you think you may now be eligible for free school meals, we would strongly encourage you to apply so that you can receive your supermarket vouchers. The school will also receive vital

funding, and your child will be entitled to other types of support. You can check your eligibility and apply at www.northumberland.gov.uk/fsm or by phoning 01670 623 592.

Arrangements from September

We await guidance from government on the next phase of wider school reopening beyond this current period. Although it looks unlikely that schools will be fully back to normal by September, I am hopeful that we will be in a position to welcome pupils back much more frequently and routinely than has been the case thus far. We are certainly planning on this basis and will keep you updated on developments as they arise.

In the meantime, the Government has recently updated its guidance to parents, which you can find [here](#).

Staffing update

Congratulations to Mrs Cave and Mrs Ferraro who have secured moves to new schools next year: Mrs Cave to Corbridge Middle School and Mrs Ferraro to a school in London. Both will be missed but particular mention must go to Mrs Cave who leaves after twenty-six years' fantastic service to Hexham Middle. We thank her, and Mrs Ferraro, and wish them both well.

Congratulations too to Mr Barry who will take over the role of SENDCo from Mrs Frankish at the end of the year, to work closely with our Assistant SENDCo, Mrs Adams.

Next week we shall be interviewing for the post of Pastoral Leader for Key Stage 2 and shall update you on the outcome of this in due course.

New build

Parents and carers may be interested in reading this recently circulated [residents' newsletter](#), which provides an update from Galliford Try on progress with our new school buildings on the high school site.

Keeping in touch

As ever, we do want to support you and your child as best we can. Beyond the phone calls home from tutors and others, please feel able to get in touch with us through the usual channels if you have any queries or concerns.

With best wishes.

Yours faithfully



Graeme Atkins
Executive Headteacher