



Fairlands Middle School

Caring and Inspirational



17 December 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

Thank you for your ongoing support and co-operation as we continue to navigate through the disruption caused by the COVID pandemic. Despite this term being the most difficult that I can remember in my teaching career, the pupils and staff have followed the safety protocols and ensured that we have remained safe. Thank you to those of you that have also had your lives disrupted by supporting isolation periods and remaining at home whilst ill or awaiting test results. Together, we have minimised the risk to ensure a successful return to school for all.

The positives remain high. I am delighted to note that the pupils have achieved over 42000 house points since September. This means that there are over 42000 instances where staff feel pupils have deserved recognition; either through hard work in lessons, completion of FITBIT tasks, their attitude to learning, being a good friend or simply being helpful. It is this attitude from the pupils that has got us all through the term and I hope that those pupils who have been awarded house point badges take great pride in their achievements to date.

Despite all of this success, many challenges will remain on our return in the New Year. Following regular reviews of our risk assessments, the school will continue to run in the district areas that were set up in September. However, to provide a change in scenery for the pupils, as well as provide access to different learning spaces, the allocated districts will show some changes:

- Year 5 will remain in the Year 5 area. The entrance and exit points will remain through Reception
- Year 6 will move to the maths block, Hut, Science 2 and ICT2. Their entrance and exit point will move to the Masons Way entrance
- Year 7 will move to the Humanities, MFL and Music area, as well as using DT1. Their entrance and exit point will move to the front of school
- Year 8 will move to the English block, Art and Science1. Their entrance and exit point will move to the Froglands Way entrance.

Social time spaces will be re-allocated to match these new district areas. The pupils were delighted about these changes when I informed them in assemblies at the end of last week.

With the ongoing uncertainty, I have decided to continue to postpone all upcoming trips and residential. Refunds have been processed for those families that were due to visit Germany and should be with families this week. For those families that were due to visit London, the refunds are being processed as I write this letter and I hope will be returned to you before we break up.



Fairlands Middle School

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Headteacher: Stefan McHale
Deputy Headteachers: Helen Heffernan and Kate Persaud
Associate Leaders: Robert Cooling and Matthew Vincent SENDCo

Safeguarding Children is everyone's responsibility.

If you are worried about any child please make an appointment to see either Helen Heffernan, Designated Safeguarding Lead or Robert Cooling, Kate Persaud, Felicity Grant, Sally Virgin, Designated Safeguarding Deputies
Alternatively, you can phone NPSCC: 0808 800 5000 Somerset Direct: 0300 123 2224

You will also see alongside my letter an attachment from Gavin Ball, CEO of the Wessex Learning Trust. You may be aware that there has been recent national updated advice regarding end of term arrangements. We, alongside the other schools in the WLT, agreed that the announcement to close on Friday 18 December as an INSET day was not enough notice for families to arrange childcare. Our existing INSET days are already set and the content planned, so this was never an option for us to take.

In addition Public Health England have agreed a 6-day window after the final day of teaching in which schools are asked to remain contactable so they can assist with contact tracing where necessary. This will allow enough time for positive COVID-19 cases to be identified and confirmed by a test and relevant contacts in the school setting to be traced and informed. They have issued the following advice:

- Where a learner or staff member tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), having developed symptoms more than 48 hours since being in school, the school should not be contacted. Parents and carers should **follow contact tracing instructions provided by NHS Test and Trace**
- For the first 6 days after teaching ends, if a learner or staff member tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), having developed symptoms within 48 hours of being in school, the school is asked to assist in identifying close contacts and advising self-isolation, as the individual may have been infectious whilst in school. **Please notify us directly at school if your child develops symptoms and tests positive in the first week of the holiday period**

To meet these requirements please ensure that you contact office@fairlandsmiddleschool.co.uk if your child tests positive during this time. We will be checking the email address daily for updates during that period.

We would ask you to keep an eye on the school website and also emails from us should any arrangements for pupils change over the Christmas period. This is currently extremely dynamic as you may know from following the press.

I hope that you all enjoy a safe and happy festive break. May I wish all families a very Merry Christmas and my very warmest wishes for a safe and successful 2021. I look forward to seeing all the pupils again on their return on Tuesday 5 January.

Yours sincerely



Stefan McHale
Headteacher