

Headteacher: Miss Caitlin Macrae

29th June 2020

Dear parents, carers and students

Re – **Weekly Update 12**

I hope that you and your families remain safe and well and that you had some time to enjoy the sunshine last week. The transition to welcoming back more of our Year 10 and 12 students, as well as additional students into our key worker 'bubbles', ran very smoothly last week and we continue to see more of our students in Year 12 and Year 9 this week. I would like to take the opportunity to thank all staff involved in this process of our wider reopening over the last few weeks. It has taken a great deal of work. Thank you also to all of you for your ongoing support and patience with this process.

As you may have heard, the government has recently made announcements about all students returning to school in September. However, we are still waiting for further guidance to inform us what will be expected with regards social distancing and health and safety measures. We are hoping to receive this guidance this week from the Department for Education, so hopefully I will be able to update you on our plans over the next couple of weeks. We are currently in the process of carefully planning our curriculum, for when all students are able to return to school. As part of the transition to the next academic year from September, each of the Heads of Year have produced a transition video for their new year group to watch. These can be found on the website as follows:

- September 2020 Year 7:
<https://www.highfield.herts.sch.uk/page/?title=Year+6+Transition&pid=46>
- September 2020 Year 8 to 11:
<https://www.highfield.herts.sch.uk/page/?title=Students&pid=8>
- September 2020 Year 12 and 13:
<https://www.highfield.herts.sch.uk/page/?title=Sixth+Form+Students&pid=15>

We will not remain open to students over the summer holiday, so the last day of the summer term will be Friday 17th July.

Staffing update

It is always a sad time of year when Highfield staff leave us and this year will be particularly difficult, given the current circumstances and the restrictions we have as a school which make it impossible to give staff our usual Highfield, in school send off. We wish them all the best in their exciting new ventures. If you or your child would like to send them a message of thanks and/or farewell, please get in touch with them via the school email address, or on admin@highfield.herts.sch.uk and we will pass these on.

Mrs Bartlett, Assistant Finance Manager
Ms Casimir, Teacher of Science
Mrs Condon, Pastoral Support Assistant
Mr Deavall, Teacher of RPS
Mr Furness, Assistant Headteacher
Miss Hough, Teacher of English
Miss Landy, History Coordinator

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Mrs Mabbs, Head of Science
Mr Rance, Head of Drama
Mrs Sanganee, Pastoral Admin Assistant
Miss Scott, Head of Physics
Mr Waterman, Teacher of Science

We very much look forward to welcoming the following members of staff in September:

Mrs Miles, Headteacher
Mrs Brennan, Head of Science
Mr Burton, Teacher of RPS
Mr Dickinson, Teacher of Science
Miss Dixon, Teacher of Science
Mrs Eastwood, Teacher of Science
Mrs Neilson, Teacher of English
Mrs Read, Head of Drama

Wellbeing

We continue to look at ways that we can support students in all year groups who are feeling anxious or worried during this period when school has been closed to most students. The Pastoral Team are still here to support students. If a student would like someone to contact them for an initial chat, they can contact one of the following:

- Tell a member of staff during the Wellbeing and Engagement Review (Year 10/12) and they will pass the message on
- Email: worried@highfield.herts.sch.uk
- Text or leave a voice message on the Pastoral Team's mobile number: 07809736011

Please remember to leave your full name and year group and someone will contact you to either arrange an appointment time and a safe place in school to meet or to talk to you over the phone.

Reading

Reading is one of the most important activities that our students are engaging in during this time. If your child is reluctant, here are just a few tips on how to best help your child engage in reading for pleasure:

- Encourage reading in all its forms: blogs, newspapers, books, magazines, reports, electronic books, the list goes on!
- Share your reading experiences: talk about what you have read with your child. This can be a newspaper report or a literary text!. Sharing reading is very effective.
- Encourage reading before bedtime – 5 minutes of reading before bed is better than not reading at all, and it is a great way to relax too.

If you would like any more help with supporting your child's reading, please read the article below. It has many great ideas.

<https://www.familiesonline.co.uk/families-magazines/east-kent/the-next-issue/motivating-children-to-read-during-lockdown?fbclid=IwAR31DvwYP8Ct2dghejn7eFavid2xbxCT83npuNVYHJ8ncNEGWy9EPU8n7il>

Our librarian, Mrs Turner, has created a virtual bookshelf, where the reading material can be accessed for free.

https://padlet.com/missturnerinthelibrary/kggg48m0649c?fbclid=IwAR36a7Yt9KM9eJxwwnIGG_IRhTS7AbEoolW9H0Ujb3C5OhZ3TE49Q4mJvw

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If your child would like to borrow a book from the school library, please contact the school on:
admin@highfield.herts.sch.uk .

To celebrate our enthusiasm for reading, Ms Bochnak-Sales is organising a project which we would love our students to participate in. All students need to do is email a photo of themselves reading a book to Ms Bochnak-Sales on: mariolabochnak-sales@highfield.herts.sch.uk . The funnier the photo, the better: it could be the whole family reading, just one person reading in a tree or even the family dog enjoying a book on the sofa! By submitting a photo for the project, you consent to the image of your child/family to be published on our website and our social media accounts. The deadline for the photos is Friday 3rd July 2020.

Pride Month

As a fully inclusive and Stonewall Bronze award school we would like our LGBTQ+ students and families to know we are here to support. June is Pride month and, although we are unable to mark this month in school as we usually would, we know that around the nation Pride will be celebrated in different ways with the message of celebration still being heard, despite lockdown.

Stonewall can offer guidance and support for young people and families. Further information can be found at <https://www.stonewall.org.uk/>

If our students have any concerns or wish to discuss any issues around LGBTQ+ please do contact worried@highfield.herts.sch.uk so that we can continue to support.

As always, if you would like to get in touch about anything, please contact admin@highfield.herts.sch.uk and we will do our best to help.

Wishing you all the best of health.

Kind regards

Caitlin Macrae
Acting Headteacher