



19th March 2020

Ref: sr/sby/let09

Dear Parent/Guardians

I have this morning met with Year 11 and Year 13 students following yesterday's announcement about School closures and the cancellation of this summer's GCSE and A Level exams with the aim of providing them with some reassurance. I have to say it was pretty emotional! I endeavoured to assure them that everything will be fine, as I truly believe that to be the case, and that they will get their just deserts. I also stressed that school education is not merely about those bits of paper they collect in August, it is far more than that. The knowledge and skills they have acquired, the experiences they have enjoyed, the opportunities they have grasped and the relationships they have built, combine in a beautiful and unique symphony, that each of our young people will continue to play and perfect in the future. That cannot be denied them, although they may feel at this point that the rug has been pulled well and truly from under their feet. We have been incredibly touched by the sheer number of students who have expressed their gratitude and have said they just can't bear to leave Wellington.

Can I just mention my colleagues at this point and the additional effort they have put in to prepare for a School closure; inevitably, they are shocked, frustrated, upset, angry, I could go on. They always inspire me but particularly so over the last few days and weeks, and I include every last one of our teaching and support staff. They have been on this five or seven year journey with your sons and daughters every single step of the way, they have lived it with them and they have no intention of leaving them to continue by themselves at this point.

To you, the parents and guardians, a huge thank you. I cannot begin to express how much your messages of support, your 'likes' on Twitter and the wine/flowers in some cases have meant this week. If Ofsted ever wanted evidence of our community value, there you have it! Stick that in your pipe and smoke it!

Putting the emotion to one side for a moment, today we will get clarification from the cabinet office on what constitutes a 'key worker' (the children of whom are invited to continue to attend school), how GCSE/A Level grades will be awarded and provision for our more vulnerable students. I will, of course, update you in due-course and particularly seek to identify which children we will need to accommodate in the coming weeks.

I finished my chat to Year 11 and Year 13 this morning with two requests and a promise:

- Please, please, please adhere to all guidance/restrictions advised by the Government aimed to delay the spread of Coronavirus (young people often believe they are indestructible but that is missing the point of course).

11-18 Academy | Headteacher: Mr S P Beeley

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- I asked them to do nothing at all next week – take a complete break! Our mental and physical health has to be a priority. We will know better over the next few days what the situation is and we will advise accordingly on work they could/should be doing. Now is not the time to worry about that.
- And finally, when this is all over, I promised we would have a bloody good party (excuse my use of the venicular)!

If you have any concerns or queries, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours faithfully

Mr S P Beeley
Headteacher

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