



Horsforth School

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Our Ref: PCB/TRH

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Dear Parent/Career,

I hope you and your family are all safe, well and adapting to our current situation.

There is lots of positive news regarding case numbers, how the NHS is coping and vaccinations so I am hopeful we are on course for re-opening on March 8th. The only question seems to be how any new variants affect Government decision making but as soon as I am given guidance we will plan and inform you as soon as possible.

Exams consultation

The Government consultation around how grades will be awarded this year had a good response rate and it has been reported that over half of the responses have been from students which is incredibly positive. The Government has said they will publish their response to the consultation in w/b 22nd February which will be a public response. I will include the link to their response in my letter of that week.

Positive Behaviour for Remote Learning

We are very pleased at both lesson attendance and the attitude towards remote learning that our students have shown. For the vast majority of our live lessons, behaviour has been excellent. We think it is important to reward students for this and I am delighted to report that staff have awarded nearly 4,000 bonus credits during the last 5 weeks. We hope this continues to motivate and encourage our young people.

Whilst behaviour has been excellent, we cannot however rest on our laurels and we do need to keep the momentum going. Therefore we have amended our Behaviour Policy for remote learning. This sets out the remote rewards system and has standardised rules for the remote classroom along with sanctions for unacceptable behaviour. Students have been introduced to the remote lesson rules this week by Form Tutors. The policy can be found under Policies and Procedures on the School website:

<https://www.horsforthschool.org/about/policies-procedures-statutory-documentation/#pp>

Wellbeing and Mental Health

Please do see the separate letter sent earlier this week with suggested links and resources for National Children's' Mental Health Week. I hope you found this useful and watched the assembly with your child.

In addition to this we would like to highlight that Child Friendly Leeds have put together [the ultimate guide for children, young people and families during lockdown](#). This includes fun and exciting activities and things to do at home, advice and guidance for families during lockdown including health and well-being,

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links to websites and apps which feature virtual sessions, educational and fun learning resources for all ages and a competitions page!

[The resources in their educational and fun learning blog](#) have been compiled to support teachers, parents/carers as well as young people to access websites and apps to add and support them with their remote education. It includes useful guides, activities, resources in specific areas such as climate change, history of Leeds, emotional health as well as fun learning links.

The [first monthly competition theme is well-being](#). In such a time of change, loss and worry for young people, prioritising personal emotional well-being is incredibly important. To help promote this message across the city, Leeds City Council are inviting children and young people to produce the ultimate personal well-being kit that can be used for children and young people across the city.

Year 13 UCAS applications

Well done to all of our year 13 students who have worked closely with the sixth form team and their tutors over the past few months to successfully complete their UCAS applications despite the challenges of having to do much of this remotely this year. All of those students wanting to apply to University this year have now submitted their forms and many of them are already receiving offers from their chosen universities. It is a very exciting time for many of them as they look ahead to the next steps in their education. If they receive invites to interviews it is important that they inform us of specific times and dates that they will be absent using the sixthform@horsforthschool.org email address. If any of them need any help or support with interview preparation or with any other aspect of their applications, they should email the sixth form team directly for guidance.

Student Voice

We have asked students about remote learning, their wellbeing and how they are coping in general. We have been really encouraged by their response. We have had 910 students respond and a few key messages have been shared below:

- 99% of students agreed or strongly agreed they are logging on and completing remote learning daily.
- 95% of students agreed or strongly agreed the school has provided them with a good standard of learning.
- 73% of students agreed or strongly agreed they were enjoying live lessons.
- 99.5% of students agreed or strongly agreed they felt safe at home.
- 29% of students agreed or strongly agreed they feel worried about COVID and lockdown.

This is a sample of the responses but we will use all the information to support students struggling, improve our provision and inform our opening plans.

There is much in the media around the impact on students and this must not be underestimated. We have tried to ensure remote learning stops gaps appearing and widening, that our pastoral support helps students struggling and that we are identifying where we can support families with devices, advice or home visits.

It is worthwhile saying that the majority of students are coping well, you, as parents are doing an amazing job keeping them safe, happy and learning and I am confident that Horsforth students are receiving better provision and support from the school and home partnership (we are doing this together) than any other school I know of.

Finally, thank you for your ongoing support and messages. It is great to pass on praise to teachers and pastoral staff but it's also worthwhile me passing back praise to you all. Parenting is probably the most

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important job any of us do and this is an extremely difficult time to do it in, I shared the student voice with you as it shows how incredibly well you are doing supporting, caring for and motivating your sons and daughters. Thank you all.

At a time when planning for the future can be stressful due to all the unknowns it is often better to look back and reflect on what we can be thankful for. I am thankful for your support, your resilience and that we have such positive and caring parents.

Yours faithfully

Dr P Bell
Headteacher