



Herne Bay High School

Specialist Sports College

Bullockstone Road, Herne Bay, Kent CT6 7NS
☎ 01227 361221 ✉ principal@hernebayhigh.org



26th June 2020

Dear Parents / Carers,

As we approach the end of June with another semi virtual week speeding by, I thought you would appreciate a round-up of what has been going on at Herne Bay High School.

Firstly, it is always worth remembering that the school has not closed at all since the 21st March. We are now regularly supporting nearly 30 students each day as part of the key worker group which has continued throughout holiday periods. Additionally, from the 15th June and as per government guidance, we have had increased numbers of students on site. Last week we invited back ALL Year 10 students who had the opportunity to come into school, meet their mentor, collect a significant amount of bespoke support work and undertake a taught English, Maths and Science session. We had over 80% of students attend and some wonderful feedback from students and parents. This process will help us plan exactly what every student needs as we move towards the end of the term and into summer. This week and next, we have all Year 12 students coming in for taught subject based lessons. Once again, the uptake is above 80%; this is fantastic and does show that students are desperate to get back into the routine of school life.

The success of these sessions led to the decision that I shared with you last week that we are now inviting ALL students back to school before the summer break. This is now fully organised and Year 9 have received their personal invites for next week. Year 8 will follow, and you will receive your invitation next week ready to come in the week of the 6th July. Year 7 will be in the week of the 13th.

I would like to reassure all parents that as soon as we get the green light from the government to get students back in in greater numbers we will, and we are confident that for the vast majority we will be able to recover the missed school time very quickly. Staff are all planning for September now and we are confident that with a mix of high-quality teaching, a rapid recovery curriculum and some additional time for certain year groups, we can get all students back on track. The opportunity to meet everyone before the summer does make this much more effective and achievable as we understand the need much more accurately.

It is worth noting that we are only allowed 25% of our Year 10 + Year 12 added together at school at any one time and from next week we only just remain inside this regulation, indicating our desire to get as many students on site as possible.

If you have had one eye on the media over the last 7 days, you will have seen all the confusion about what will happen in September. The Prime Minister has clearly said that "all students will be back in school full time from September". Whilst this is absolutely what we want, we must work within whatever guidance we get from the Department for Education and also the state of the country and the pandemic in September. I cannot at this moment promise anything concrete, we are awaiting detailed updates by the end of next week and shall plan accordingly. However, whatever we are told, I can say that we will ensure that from September, all students will be on site, in face to face lessons, for as much of the time as we can possibly manage. I think it is still likely that we will be blending time in school with time at home but I will communicate what this means for you all as soon as possible.



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What has been a welcome announcement is that there will be some extra funding to help “catch up” in September. We will look carefully at how we use this to maximum effect. The National Tutoring Scheme also has potential to help support some of the most at need students gain back lost time with small group tuition. The details are limited at the moment, but I hope if appropriate, we can make good use of this facility. Further details can be found here:

<https://schoolsweek.co.uk/coronavirus-schools-education-catch-up-plan-tutoring-650-350-million/>

I hope that you have had an opportunity to look closely at the remote learning that your child has been receiving. Over the last 3 weeks staff have significantly increased the amount of either “live” or “teacher voice record lessons “ and these are often “Microsoft Sways” or Microsoft Streams”. Many are linked through Office 365 and Microsoft Teams which your child has completely free access to.

Please see video here for help <https://www.hernebayhigh.org/information/learning-from-home/>

For simplicity you can easily see in “Show My Homework” (called satchel one) – exactly what has been set, what is required for submission and also see the quality of the work we are producing. We are also starting to deliver “college assemblies” and asking mentors to call their mentees again before the end of term. This is in addition to the hundreds of calls being made daily by colleges and the Inclusion/SEND team to check in on students and families.

I also mention our social media every time I write because it is a wonderful platform to share all the extra activities that are happening on a daily basis. It is also where we are celebrating student work both within and beyond school. You may have noticed that this week is virtual sports week and the ongoing college competition as to who is “best” is as real as ever, the promotional videos produced by each college clearly set the scene. The resourcefulness of staff and students to bring a smile to the faces of our community is a continued joy to me and something the school holds dear to its heart.

You will have received the 5th edition of “The Heron” yesterday. This is the parent magazine that has been a product of lockdown and I do urge you to cast an eye over it as this month’s edition has a focus on memories, something very pertinent at this time.

The Heron edition 5 can be found here : <https://sway.office.com/OABgh65MZ96ZUIVS?ref=Link>

We are entering a very crucial time in the life of the coronavirus pandemic. Society, locally and nationally we are starting to “get back to normal”. The pictures we see in the media of people cheek by jowl on beaches, in parks and at events is concerning. For those that have tried to visit a dentist, doctor, hospital, who cannot go to the gym, the local swimming pool, get their hair cut or see the measures in most shops will still understand what we must all do to ensure we “manage & control” the virus. We must all still do the right thing or we will be back to square one. As we continue to welcome more students back onto school site, I would urge you to remind your child that we take the measures very seriously at school and will insist on adherence to them at all times to ensure everyone remains safe.

I will keep you updated on the forthcoming plans as soon as we hear anything ourselves. In the meantime, I do hope you have a good weekend, continue to stay safe and look after yourselves and your families

With kindest regards,

Jon Boyes
Principal