

9<sup>th</sup> February 2021

## Letter to all parents from Sean Bullen (DOE) at the end of a very busy half term.

Dear Parent/Carer,

Thank you to everyone, for your support of the work at all our schools. As you are more than aware, for most of our students we moved to Remote Learning from 5<sup>th</sup> January. In addition, we have had between 10% and 30% of students attending our schools, who are classed as Key Worker or vulnerable students. Thanks for all your efforts since the New Year. It has been hard work - but made easier by your help and support. All our schools have shown a great sense of community, with students, parents/carers and staff working together very well.

We all want our children back in school. Many of you may have found 'Home Learning' enjoyable, some may have found it challenging. However, we all know the best place for both academic learning and for student wellbeing, is to be in school. At the present time, the earliest return date for schools is 8<sup>th</sup> March. On 22<sup>nd</sup> February the Government will outline their plans for the gradual re-opening of society, with schools the top priority. In Primary you will be aware that national assessments have been cancelled this year. In Secondary, we will also find out after half term more about arrangements for Year 11 assessment. The key for all our children is to work as hard as possible in school or at home. This hard work will in the end help them, whatever the Government decides. All our children will one day look back at this time in their lives, as a challenging time, but we will support them all to help them find their future paths.

I certainly cannot write to you this week without paying tribute to the life of Captain Sir Tom Moore. A hero twice in his lifetime, but an absolute inspiration in the last twelve months. His determination, humility and positive outlook have helped us all through the darkest of times. He said 'Tomorrow will be a good day'. Indeed, it will be, particularly now the vaccinations are being rolled out. I recall the Sunday school hymn :

One more step along the world I go  
One more step along the world I go  
From the old things to the new  
Keep me travelling along with you

Like Captain Sir Tom, we are all taking small steps together, to come through this crisis as one nation. Our thoughts are with his family, but we can also reflect that as a centurion in age terms, he has walked with others, through darker storms than today, and he gives us great hope for the future.

On a practical level where a pupil develops symptoms on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> or Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> February, please use the FCAT e-mail address below. If symptoms develop on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> February and before the return on 22<sup>nd</sup> February you do not need to contact the school and should use the 'normal' national NHS track and trace system.

The email will be checked daily over Valentine's Day weekend, probably the strangest Valentines Day in history.

To make sure cases are dealt with as efficiently as possible please include the following details in your email:

Contact name and telephone number  
Name of school attended  
Student name and form group  
Date of onset of symptoms  
Date covid test taken and date of positive result.

If further details are required a member of the school staff will be in contact with you.

The e-mail address to be used over Valentine's Day weekend is:

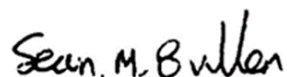
[Covidtracing@fcat.org.uk](mailto:Covidtracing@fcat.org.uk)

Finally, the vaccination programme is going well, and we all fervently hope that we can return to some kind of normality, perhaps after Easter, but certainly by the Summer. Your school will be in touch as soon as a more detailed return date is clarified by the Government.

So Hands, Face, Space!

Keep the faith for a little while longer

In partnership



FCAT Director of Education