

24<sup>th</sup> September 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

### **Regrouping of Year 7 Classes**

I hope this letter finds you and your family safe and well. I would like to take the opportunity to thank you for your support of your child and of us in their first few weeks of life at secondary school here at Balshaw's C.E. High School. As I have stated to staff this week, our Year 7s have made an excellent start with us and continue to show a good deal of resilience under the most challenging circumstances that any new starters have had to face. For this they should be praised and commended.

This transition from Primary school under our Covid-safe measures has undoubtedly been aided by what are largely Form Tutor groupings that we have put in place at the start of the term. The intention of these groupings was always to aid the settling in process, but was also necessitated by a lack of any accurate KS2 prior attainment data due to the effects of educational disruption experienced across all key stages over recent months. In the last two weeks Year 7 have completed their Cognitive Ability Tests (CATs) in school, which provide accurate baseline data for literacy and numeracy. The analysis of this data alongside our improved knowledge of the cohort over the first few weeks, as well as our transition information about any specific learning needs of students, has now allowed us to re-group students across the year.

These groups will continue to be mixed prior attaining/ability groups across all subjects in the curriculum and the guiding principle for all teachers in their delivery of the curriculum will continue to be that they 'teach to the top' with high aspirations and expectations for all, in line with the mantra of 'Achievement for All'. The most important focus for teaching and learning at Balshaw's then becomes ensuring that we scaffold and support all students in their progress towards these learning aspirations.

This grouping structure will allow us to review and amend groupings as appropriate throughout the academic year so that we are always confident that students are placed in the social mix that allows students of all ability levels to thrive and flourish in a challenging, supportive and where appropriate, a nurturing learning environment. These groupings are currently being finalised in school with oversight by the Pastoral team, Curriculum Leaders as well as Mrs Rogerson (SENDCo).

Continued

New timetables will be printed and distributed to Year 7s during Period 5 on Friday 25<sup>th</sup> September in readiness for Monday 28<sup>th</sup> September when the year group will commence their new timetable. There are so many positive and tangible benefits to this re-grouping structure, not least the excellent opportunity for our Year 7s to meet fellow students in their year group other than those in their Form Tutor group. Their teachers will continue to teach the high-quality learning experiences which your sons/daughters have had in the first few weeks and as formal assessments begin to be completed through the year, you as parents/carers, will start to be provided with valuable feedback and tracking of their progress at the start of their Key Stage Three journey.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me at school.

Best wishes,



J S Morgan  
Deputy Headteacher  
Curriculum & Standards



S C Haycocks  
Headteacher