



# Longbenton High School

25<sup>th</sup> March 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

I am writing to you at the end of our third week of full reopening just as we break for the Easter holidays. Staff have worked tirelessly to ensure that the clear routines our children need to succeed are in place; that excellent lessons are ready for face-to-face learning and that those needing additional support with the transition back to school are receiving it.

As you would expect given our drive to improve standards and behaviour, numbers of permanent and fixed term exclusions have risen in recent months, but the number of lower-level incidents has seen a significant reduction and the school has run for the last few weeks in the most calm, positive way that we could have imagined. We have higher and higher expectations of your children, which they meet every time we raise them.

We have had hundreds of nominations in the past fortnight for our 'Holbrook's Heroes' awards (students recognised as living our school values: kindness, honesty, positivity, determination and ambition); over 200 were nominated last week alone and you can see the prize winners who were selected [here](#). Special mention must be given to Katie (Y11), Ashley (Y10), Madeleine (Y9), Oliver (Y8) and Hollie, Lucas, James and Thomas (Y7), who were all the most nominated students in their respective year groups.

## **Year 11 and 13 centre assessed grades**

Most Year 11 and 13 students will have completed at least one assessment by now since returning on March 8<sup>th</sup>. The timeline towards the awarding of grades continues to be as follows:

- Students will complete a minimum of 3 assessed pieces of work (or units of coursework) in school with the aim of improving their overall grade
- Staff can discuss what the assessments will be based on (eg topic areas) but not exact questions
- Staff can give students their assessment result as a number or percentage, but cannot tell them grades yet
- Our deadline for marking and moderation of assessed work just after May half term; we must submit our final grades to the exam boards by June 18<sup>th</sup>
- Students will find out their grades on results days as usual (note the changed dates) but there will be no national algorithm applied this year (so grades we submit will not be moved up or down)

Ofqual, JCQ and the exam boards have been slower than expected (following the Ofqual consultation outcomes at the end of February) in issuing further materials and guidance. We understand that information from JCQ may be published in the next week or so, with grade descriptors and assessment materials following from the exam boards by 31 March. Further exemplification materials are likely to be published after Easter to use in school as part of these assessments.

We are still waiting for clarity from the DfE on expectations around Year 11 and 13 attendance once they have finished work that will contribute towards their assessments. It is likely that May half term will be the point at which formal education for Year 11 and 13 will finish (as is usually the case in any other year) and the majority of North Tyneside secondaries are working towards this same end point.

## **NE12 6<sup>th</sup> Form**

We have now completed the initial post-16 interviews for Year 11. Many students have accessed the curriculum and subject information on both our / George Stephenson's websites to find out more about A level and Level 3



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equivalent courses. After Easter both schools will be sharing their subject numbers and we will co-ordinate initial timetabling for September 2021.

We want to see as many students as possible from Year 11 joining our NE12 Sixth Form. We know that lockdown and disruption to Year 10-11 since last year has made many students unsure about next steps or whether they are right for 6<sup>th</sup> form. With that in mind, we are **keen to talk to students and parents again after Easter about joining our 6<sup>th</sup> form in September**. We will be bringing Year 11 students to our 6<sup>th</sup> form area during PSHE time to see our re-designed new common room area and to meet some of our current students.

Any student who has changed their mind about options can contact Mr Williams by email directly at [iw@longbenton.org.uk](mailto:iw@longbenton.org.uk) or can approach Miss Maughan, their form tutor, or any member of the senior team at [slt@longbenton.org.uk](mailto:slt@longbenton.org.uk). A reminder that the NE12 promotional video, on-line prospectus, subject videos and option blocks can all be found by clicking the 'NE12 Sixth Form' tab on the school website homepage; the promo film is [here](#).

## Year 7 Admissions 2021

School places have been provisionally allocated for our new Year 7 and we are delighted to confirm we will have a full Year 7 of 180 students. It is wonderful to see so many siblings of current students due to join our wonderful school community.

## Lateral flow testing at home / positive results over Easter

All students will have received their home testing kits by now and (those who are able to) should be testing twice weekly at home. This should continue over the Easter holidays. Please continue to report results online (this information is critical for public health understanding of the case rates in North Tyneside) and inform us of any positive results. **Students must test before returning to school for the summer term**, either the night before, or morning of the first day back (11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> April) in order to find and isolate any positive cases.

If your child tests positive for Covid or develops symptoms within 48 hours of being in school (in other words, by 4pm on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> March), please let the school know urgently so we can contact trace. **After the evening of Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> March, you do not need to let us know about positive Covid cases or symptoms**, unless your child is self-isolating or unwell and cannot return to school on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> April. The contact email to use in the holidays is [slt@longbenton.org.uk](mailto:slt@longbenton.org.uk)

## Uniform

I also wanted to take this opportunity to remind you of our expectations around school uniform. We have had a bit of an amnesty around school uniform this half term for many reasons, not least the fact that some students have outgrown their school uniform during lockdown. Unfortunately, some students have taken it as an opportunity to exploit this leniency.

As we move into the summer term, we want to ensure we resume our usual high standards of school uniform across all year groups. Therefore, we expect to see **all students return to school following the Easter break in full uniform**. This is outlined below:

- School blazer with badge
- Plain black V-neck jumper (jumpers are optional; blazers are not)
- Plain white shirt with collar



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- Black trousers or skirt
- Black or white socks or black tights
- Plain black shoes (these can be trainers as long as they are plain black with black logos/markings)
- Striped clip-on tie

Please note that if a jumper is worn it should be without any wording or designs on it. Jumpers should be v-necked, not rounded and should not be sweatshirts. Students should not wear hoodies or other items of clothing under their blazer. Hats are not to be worn in the building. Jumpers should not be tucked into skirts.

Tracksuit bottoms or leggings are not school uniform and therefore should not be worn outside of PE lessons.

All uniform can be purchased online from Emblematic. In addition, Asda stores alongside Sainsbury's, Next and Marks and Spencer's have stocks of school trousers, skirts, jumpers and shirts where you can order online to 'click and collect'. Emblematic are open for a click and collect service.

For those students who receive Free School Meals, we have only just received our allocated number of vouchers to support with the purchase of uniform; apologies for the short notice with regard to these but it has been beyond our control. These vouchers can be collected from school after Easter if parents have not been able to get to school to pick them up today.

### **Face masks**

The DfE were expected to make a decision on face masks in schools by now but we have had nothing from the government to suggest that face mask expectations are changing as yet. So we will continue to expect students to wear them in lessons and in communal areas on their return to school after Easter.

### **Parents Evenings – School Cloud**

One of the key actions for us from our parent survey last month was to respond to concerns around formal feedback about progress. We know that the normal parents' evening schedule has been massively disrupted by lockdown since last year and we have been seeking an online solution that will enable us to carry out parents' evenings remotely. So, from Easter, we will be trialling School Cloud for parents' evening contact, starting with Year 10 on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> April. It is an intuitive and easy to use online appointment booking system that allows you to choose your own appointment times with teachers. There will be more information straight after Easter about how the system works and how to book video appointments.

Thank you for your continued support this term. I am sure you also will join me in thanking our staff, who have risen to so many difficult challenges since Christmas. Their spirit and professionalism always makes me very proud to lead such a wonderful school.

Best wishes for a safe and happy Easter break.

Kelly Holbrook

Headteacher