



Dear Parents, Carers and Year 6 pupils,

First and foremost, I hope this letter finds you and your families well. While there is no escaping the impact Coronavirus has had on us all, I sincerely hope that it has not affected your family too greatly and your family has managed to remain safe, well, or has recovered from any associated illness.

Support for you now:

Please let me just take a moment to assure you that if you need any support at all, you can contact me via email or indeed call me via the school switch-board. You may also contact me directly via the Facebook Messenger App (Name: Norham Head).

Norham High School is a close family; we are here to support all pupils and families, current and future. As such, I kindly ask that you to take just few minutes to look at some of the wonderful things we have done in recent months since the viral outbreak and since my appointment as Headteacher in September 2019.

By going online, you will see examples of the wonderful things we do and have built on or developed rapidly this academic year. These can be viewed via our school website and social media, and include examples of our exceptional online learning resources and supporting families with food during these difficult times.

The world has changed... but before this, our school changed:

It's hard to believe just how much the country, indeed the world, has changed in the past few months. However, I hope this demonstrates to you all that change is possible and it can be rapid! In our case, change was for the better and it was long overdue - any view that our school is not great is now completely out of date and out of touch – I will defend our pupils, our families and this community to the hilt.

Let me be clear, I have never had the pleasure of working with such lovely children until I joined Norham and through the work we have done since September, we have shown what exactly is possible when you work hard, dream big, and challenge yourself while being nothing other than polite to peers and staff.

What I can tell you is that I keep things exceptionally clear and in September I told staff and pupils:

- Anything and everything we would do at Norham, from September 2019, had to be good enough for my own children, nothing less was acceptable.
- The relationships formed and teaching delivered by staff had to be good enough for my own children. Again, nothing less was acceptable.
- The behaviour demonstrated by pupils had to be in-line with what I would expect of any child (my own included), nothing less would be tolerated. I was clear with pupils, saying that if you want people to think highly of you and respect you, you have to demonstrate it yourself – respect has to be earned!
- Everyone must attend school to learn and have fun – you must work hard and always try your best. While doing so, pupils had to present themselves to the highest standards, wear full uniform, carry a school bag and full equipment pack. Again, nothing less will do.



Hopefully these bullet points show you that by keeping things clear and simple, yet underpinning the highest standards, anything can change for the better and our recent Ofsted monitoring report confirmed this.

Exceptional Teaching and Learning:

All staff plan lessons/learning using our Learning Model - a four stage approach to learning that introduces and explains "The Big Picture of Learning" before moving on to develop "New Knowledge and Skills".

The next stage "Deepens Understanding" before finally giving pupils and staff the opportunity to "Review and Reflect" on what has been learned or developed; this helps to improve future learning.

In addition to this, all pupils are challenged through our BAR system of differentiation. The BAR – a Thermometer using Blue/Amber/Red colours - makes every lesson challenging yet accessible to all.

Through BAR, all staff plan all lessons to be exceptionally ambitious (Red/Red Hot) but then differentiate lessons and learning down to be accessible (Amber or Blue). However, the learning focus remains the same and therefore secures the greatest level of progress possible based on each individual's starting point. This means, unlike many other secondary schools, pupils can move straight onto work they find appropriately demanding.

So, what next:

I would like to reassure you that your child's place with us is safe and we really are looking forward to meeting our new pupils. We know these are difficult times for everyone which makes welcoming you to our exceptional school community all the more important.

Ensuring our new pupils have the smoothest transition possible is something we value very strongly. Detailed on our school website norhamhigh.com is key information about Norham High School that I would encourage you to read. This will give you a flavour of the exciting things to come for your child, as well as documents that outline the fantastic progress we have made as a school this year.

With the school being closed due to the Coronavirus outbreak, we have had to make changes to all of our plans for the summer term. As nobody knows exactly when the current situation will change, we are busy planning an exciting alternative transition programme that we will inform you of soon after the June half-term; this includes a transition work pack and video briefing from my team and I. In the meantime, I ask that all Year 6 pupils write me a short letter sharing with me what they are most looking forward to or are worried about. I will read each and every letter and address/discuss it with staff, tutors and your child. Please include full name and primary school and send these to my assistant at sharon.lennox@ntlp.org.uk no later than the end of June. I look forward to receiving these. Finally, on the back of this letter, there are a few welcome messages from our current Year 7 School Councillors.

We all very much look forward to welcoming your child soon!

We wish you and your families a safe, peaceful and happy half-term.

Yours faithfully,

Mr Conway



Letters from our School Council: Genuine Pupil Voice

Greetings new Year 7,

I would like to welcome you to Norham High School (even though we are stuck at home due to the coronavirus). Norham is a wonderful high school and a place where you won't feel lonely. Everyone is there for you and will help you with whatever you need.

I came to this school last year when I left Year 6, as a Year 7 pupil and I will never regret this decision.

I made lots of new friends and the teachers are wonderful and very kind.

Norham is an amazing place and the school motto is perfect: 'Believe, Strive, Achieve'. We are very happy to have pupils like you coming to Year 7 and hope you will have a great time at Norham!

~

Dear New Year 7's,

I am writing this letter to tell you guys how Year 7 was for me: it's a fun year but, you still have to work hard!

But also as you go through it gives you so many opportunities to earn badges and respect points. This was the best thing for me and when I earned my first "LORIC" badge I was so proud I felt like I was on top of the world which is the best feeling you could get.

I loved my time in Year 7 and made lots of good memories. I was really shy at first but then I became a bit more open I hope that happens to you guys because everyone feels scared the first few days but when you open up it's the best feeling. So this was my story and I am excited to hear yours next year.

I hope you have an amazing time in Year 7 and enjoy yourself.

Kind regards, Year 7 School Council Member

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Dear New Year 7's,

I hope you are excited to be a part of Norham; it is great!

At first, I thought I would only be able to hang out with my sister but I ended up with a huge amount of friends! Even my sister's friends were supporting me. I started to feel more involved in stuff and more confident as the days went. There are a lot of after school clubs, lunch clubs and competitions that you can join! I go to rugby, the library, football and sometimes I just stay after school.

I'm sure all of you will be fine! Year 7 goes really fast so do what you need to. I know this is a weird way to end Year 6 but it is a nearly normal start to Year 7! I hope you enjoy and make friends in maybe all years!

Good Luck!