



SEATON VALLEY FEDERATION OF SCHOOLS

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19 June 2020

Good afternoon

I hope this letter finds you well? So, another week has passed and we are now closer to the end of the term than we are the start and people are beginning to think about what is going to happen in the summer and then in September.

As seems the case all too often now I have no concrete news to share with you. As I write this letter, we are still awaiting to hear what the government's plan for education in the future including the summer holidays is going to be. I hope that we hear soon so that we can make our plans and then share them with you.

However there has been good news this week. Firstly, those pupils who receive free school meals will get these paid for over the summer holidays. That is great news and I strongly recommend that if you qualify for free school meals that you apply for them and receive that help. As soon as we have details on how this summer system is going to work, we will share them with parents.

We also had the news that we can bring in other year groups for face to face meetings with staff to see how people are doing and also to look at some leaving events for the year 8 at both middle schools. Mr Scott, Mrs McSparron and Mr Souter will be in touch with parents in years 5,7,8 and 9 to share with them what the plans are for each school.

We are also looking at having transition events over the next few weeks for the year 4s and the year 8s and again details will go direct to the relevant parents.

This is fantastic news that we can get to see our pupils before the end of the year face to face and just see how everyone is doing. Of course, parents will be invited to these events as well and all safety precautions will be followed.

Some people have asked me why are the schools not open to more pupils and are we being a blocker to the wider opening. Can I say that this is not the case. In the federation we want to see the pupils back in all 3 schools and we are always looking at ways of making this happen in a safe way. But the simple fact is that if we have social distancing rules/guidelines of 2m then we are restricted to 12 pupils in a class and that means we do not have enough rooms in the schools and also not enough staff. I am not sure if relaxing the distance to 1m would have that much of an impact. Also, we would still need to have really strict controls on movement around the school and staggered start and end times. But all these can be overcome. It is the 2m social distance rule and size of class that is the main problem.

So, what will the situation be like in September? The simple answer is I still don't know as we have had no guidance from the department for education. My personal view is that I would like all the pupils back in school come September. However, that will not be as in normal schooling. I believe that we will be looking at some form of rota where pupils are in for a period of time and then at home for a period of time if current social

distancing guidelines remain in place. But I must be very clear this has not been set out as a plan by anyone. It is my personal view based on the fact that I believe all of our pupils deserve to be in school in some way in September. I promise as soon as I hear anything or we have a plan I will share that with you. I realise that we are only 4 weeks away from the end of the term but presently all I can share is what my personal wish is.

As we move closer to the end of the term, I will be sharing with you the staff who are leaving and those who are joining us next year. Also, the term dates and training dates for the next two years will be put on the website soon for those people who like to plan ahead.

I realise that we are in a different part of lockdown now as things are loosened off and shops open and I see today there is much discussion about when hairdressers will be able to open. I must admit this is one area of the lockdown that has had very little interest for me. I am sure you can work out why! All I would ask is that we all practice social distancing and that we are as safe as we possibly can be. Also I just wanted to let you know that if you or someone you know is struggling and would benefit from some support in the form of extra food or other goods please let us know because we are able to access support for people who need it.

As always, many thanks for your support and we are looking forward to seeing you and your children over the next few weeks.

Take care, be safe and all my best wishes.



John Barnes
Executive Headteacher