



Spalding High School

Stonegate, Spalding, Lincolnshire, PE11 2PJ
Telephone 01775 722110 **Fax** 01775 719724
Email enquiries@spaldinghigh.lincs.sch.uk



Headmistress Mrs M Anderson B.Ed

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Dear parents, carers and students,

I would like to take this opportunity to write my update letter directly to our students today but hope that parents and carers read it with their children too.

How are you coping with life under lockdown?

I hope that you are all well and adjusting to life under lockdown. I know that life feels very different at the moment and that can be worrying; it is natural to feel anxious about the current situation and to be missing family, friends and probably by now, even school and your teachers. Continuing to talk about our worries and how we are coping will help and I hope that you are all finding ways to support each other and within your families. If, at any point, you would like to speak to someone at school, please contact your Form Tutor, or Head of Year, Mrs Jarvis, Mrs French or Mrs Ray. The normal support mechanisms are still up and running in school; pastoral staff check their emails every day and there is a Senior Leader on duty at school each day. We are happy to help and have a chat if you want to. If you would like additional support please remember that there is a letter on the school website home page called "Support for Student Well-being" that has further advice and links to useful websites.

When might we come back to school?

The lockdown is continuing for longer than I for one first thought it would have to, and I am sure like the rest of the population, I have a greater understanding now that social distancing will have to become the norm for a considerable time longer. I am sure, like me, you all have your fingers crossed that scientists are able to find a vaccine or medication that can lessen the impact of the virus sooner rather than later. I sense that because of the semi-rural area that we live in, we have for the most part not seen the impact of the virus as perhaps some other parts of the county have. Whilst we all hope that remains the case, we have to start to consider how we will hopefully return to school whilst also keeping you, and the staff safe.

We have not been told yet when schools will be allowed to reopen. There has been lots of discussion in the media about the issue but no date has been set. There has been discussion about certain year groups starting before others, students attending on certain days, and how students will maintain social distancing when they do return to school. There has also been lots of discussion about how the virus seems to have a milder effect on children and the feeling in some quarters that schools should therefore be one of the first places to reopen. However, we have to remember that more than 10% of our school population are adults and we have to keep them safe too. I have been following all of these reports and information from lots of other sources closely. The Senior Team and I have already started to think about the procedures we will have to put in place to welcome you and the staff back when we do get permission to reopen. At the moment there is a lot of uncertainty (and that does not always help how we feel) and so it is important to retain a sense of perspective and keep hold of the absolute knowledge that we will, at some point, come back to school!

How are you coping with the work?

Your teachers have spent a lot of time preparing work for the first two cycles of school closure. Many organisations such as the Department for Education, the examination boards and BBC Bitesize have adjusted their provision for remote learning and this will be useful for teachers to set you work as the lockdown continues. I for one will be setting my classes work based on these interactive resources in the coming weeks. It is important that you communicate with your teachers via email if you find the work tricky. Be aware that staff teach multiple classes and several hundreds of students and so it may take a day or two to

respond to your queries. It is also important that you put your very best efforts into your work just as though you were still in school. I know that remote learning can be a challenge and sometimes it might be nicer to do other things but the effort you put into your work is being noticed by teachers and so continue to try your very best. As the time under lockdown continues, the effort you put in will become even more important; as is completion of the work. Make sure you finish everything properly!

Are you getting involved in the School Closure Challenges?

School is about more than work; we do lots of fun things at the High School to engage with each other. That is why the School Closure Challenges are so important. Lots of you are getting involved but we would like to see even more of you participating.

Mrs Ray is going to start the School Closure Challenge House points competition. As promised, house points will be awarded to each entry. Mrs Ray has decided that this will be 25 points and is busy creating a house league table for the first two challenges. We will also be presenting everyone who enters with a School certificate for participating.

The outcomes of Challenge One (Unicorns) is still on the website and the PowerPoint for Challenge Two (Easter) will be posted today. The entries were FANTASTIC; my goodness so many egg-cellent (sorry!) bakes and decorations were made. What a talented bunch you are – so much so it proved impossible to pick out any for a particular mention! Check out the Challenge Two results and see for yourself. The PowerPoint is on the website.

Challenge Three (Pets) is also launched today. Please find it attached. I have to say that we are very much looking forward to seeing your pictures and depending upon the number of entries we have, Mrs Ray and I might also introduce different categories and try to pick out some winners!

Finally, as always, stay safe and keep in touch, with each other and with us.

Best regards,
Mrs Anderson