

25th March 2020

Good Morning Year 9,

This is definitely an unusual way to address you all, but I suppose it is how we'll be working for the next while. I hope that you are all well and that the first few days of working from home have gone well. I don't want to talk too much about school on this first week away from the Academy, but I do need to discuss a few points.

Firstly, I apologise for the abrupt ending to the term! The other year groups had an opportunity to say goodbye, and I am saddened that we did not. However, this does not detract from us being a Family and we will still support you during this odd time! If you need any support, your mentors are only at the other end of an email, as am I. Please don't hesitate to contact us if there is anything you're concerned about!

Secondly (with my teacher cap on for a moment!), you have all been assigned work on SMHW to complete on a daily basis according to the timetable you have received. We are going to be tracking that the work is being accessed and completed- this is going to count as you attending the Academy for a day, so if you don't access the tasks provided, it will count against your attendance. The main reason for this is that we need to ensure that you are continuing to be educated at this time, but also to hold you accountable for your work. You are GCSE students now, and the expectations of you has never been higher! However, I have faith that you will all rise to the challenge.

Thirdly, I have no doubt that many of you will struggle with the lack of routine that you are used to (I'm sure many of you are cheering at the thought of being off of school, but I guarantee it's going to hit you soon!) That's part of the reason for your timetables of work. But remember to make use of the time you have now to try something new, or learn a new skill. How many of you know how to polish your shoes? How many of you can (safely!) cook a meal? Or know how a computer actually functions? Take the extra time you have to try and learn something new, or take up a hobby. One of those should definitely be reading! There is going to be a lot of down time over the next while, especially after Monday's announcement, so a book is one way of entertaining yourselves while educating yourselves and expanding your vocabulary. If you want to start slowly, and audiobook is one way to dip your toe in. Audible is currently offering a collection of books for free at <https://stories.audible.com/start-listen> so it would definitely be worth your while to see what's available. While there are certainly difficulties with the current situation we are in, there are plenty of silver linings too!

Finally, I just want to reiterate how important it is for you to follow the social distancing guidelines while they are in effect. As young people, you are one of the least at risk groups and are often asymptomatic. This means that you might carry the virus, but not show any outward signs of it. The problem is that if you carry it, you can pass it on. Therefore, if you are following the guidelines, even if you are asymptomatic, you minimise the risk of infecting someone who may not be as lucky as you. I understand that this could be difficult, but it will be worthwhile in the long run, and it will make your chances to socialise again all the sweeter!



I will be contacting you as a group once a week from now on with some updates and advice. Remember that if you need support that we will be here to do our best for you, regardless of whether you're in the building or not!

All the best,

Mr Falvey
Year 9 Family Leader



Executive Principal – Mr Andy Booth
Associate Principal – Ms Catrin Green

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