

Framwellgate School Durham
Newton Dr, Durham, DH1 5BQ

0191 386 6628
enquiries@framdurham.com

www.framdurham.com

21 October 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

As we end our first half-term of the academic year, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your support and to provide you with some further updates and information.

Covid-19

Compared to many secondary schools in the North-East, we have managed the first 8 weeks of term with relatively little disruption. At the time of writing we have had six positive cases and, as a result, approximately 50 students needing to self-isolate because they were identified as close contacts. We have also had students and staff self-isolating at various points in the term as they experienced symptoms (or someone in their household did). Whilst clearly disruptive, and I do feel for those in that position, we have not had to send home year groups, nor cancel lessons or double up classes as many of our neighbouring schools have. I would never claim that our relatively fortunate position is due solely to the measures we have taken (there is a huge element of luck involved, and much of the praise should go to parents for ensuring their children and families follow the guidelines out of school), but I am sure they will have helped.

The measures we have taken will continue next half-term and probably into the Spring, but there are positive noises coming out of Government now about a vaccine and it would be good to think that as we approach Easter, we can review our approach.

We have had some bad weather to contend with already and I can only apologise for the fact that we can't keep your child dry throughout the day; we do our best to speed up transitions and keep students inside where we can, but this is not always possible (for safety reasons) so please be patient with us and ensure your child has a waterproof and/or umbrella when it is raining.

Thank you again for responding to my plea to ensure that your child has a mask with them. Students wear masks in the buildings, but we can reduce further the number of disposable masks we are selling if your child can bring their own.

Behaviour

The behaviour of our students continues to be something I am proud of. We recently had a visitor into school, an internationally renowned consultant who visits hundreds of schools in the course of his work. He commented that behaviour in class was amongst the best he has seen in the country. That is not to say there aren't issues to deal with; in fact, when student behaviour is so good, non-compliance stands out even more. As you are aware, we use a 3-stage process of warnings in lessons to ensure that classes are not disrupted. Students receive 2 stages before it being necessary for them to be removed from the lesson, so as not to disrupt the learning of others. On an average day, there may be 3 students removed (from a total of 1100 students). These are students who don't heed a second warning and continue to disturb others in the room.

Currently students do not receive a behaviour point if given a stage 1 or 2 warning. We have decided that a change to this will be necessary after half term, as a small number of students appear to be taking advantage of the warning system to correct their behaviour at the last minute. Stage 1 will be as normal, an opportunity for students to correct their behaviour, whilst stage 2 will have a behaviour point assigned to it. This means that parents will be aware (via

Parent app) of when their child has been warned twice for disrupting a lesson. Stage 3 will continue to mean a removal from lesson. This information can be found in our rewards and sanctions brochure which was sent to you earlier this term and is in our behaviour policy on our website.

Uniform

Please remember that as the weather turns colder the school jumper/pullover becomes compulsory after October half term. Hoodies should not be worn under any circumstances. We are ventilating classrooms more now so it is even more important that students are warm enough in school.

I would like to make a further request about uniform. Our students are extremely smart, and I believe our uniform requirements are very clear and easy to understand. Our website includes examples of what is acceptable and not acceptable, and our students (and parents) fully comply and support us. Where there is a financial constraint, we always try to help. Each half-term we do receive a handful of emails, phone calls and complaints from parents about our uniform requirements. Some of this communication is rude, some is abusive, and some of it suggests that (amongst other things), the requirements are "ridiculous", their child is being "targeted or singled out", or that staff should be "subject to the same rules". None of us came into the profession to deal with uniform issues but I can assure you that we will apply our rules fairly and with sensitivity. Ultimately, they are rules, they are very clear, and they were explained to parents in advance of the school year. Please support me and my staff by ensuring your child follows them.

Now that our "new" uniform has been in place for two years, you may be in possession of items that your child no longer needs or has grown out of. **Donations of uniform** would be gratefully received and can be dropped off at main reception between 10am and 2pm when school is open.

Remote Learning

As I said in a recent communication, we are updating our software and procedures to allow for greater "remote" learning. This is a requirement of the Government but one we support. Students who can't come to school because they are self-isolating (or in the event of partial or full closure) will now have access to Microsoft Teams which has a facility to access "live" lessons whilst at home, or receive recorded lesson content, resources or materials, by logging into one place. This facility will largely replace SIMs Engagement. Further information and training will be provided to students, but we have had to adopt new policies for live lessons so that we comply with all GDPR guidelines and advice from the NSPCC and teacher associations.

At the end of this letter you will find an agreement, which outlines our expectations of teachers, students and parents. We would ask parents to acknowledge they agree by reading the agreement and confirming this on this electronic link.

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=d9C1zRtBjEOkQpWYubYmEQADv2C62V9Jilv2-UGVvU5UMzhPUzCwRzIYUEdTNEIDQjBFQUIYOEhIQy4u>

Thank You

Thank-you again for your support. It really is much appreciated. I know that for many of you, things aren't easy, but your children are a credit to you and themselves. I hope you all manage to have a good half-term break. School will reopen again on Monday 2nd November.

Yours faithfully



Andy Byers
Headteacher

Remote Learning Behaviour Agreement

Remote Learning and the use of Microsoft Teams will now be an additional element of our teaching provision in the event of individual or larger groups of students isolating at home. To use this platform effectively and provide the very best experience for all students, we must ensure that all parties are protected and shown respect, and that those participating agree to the Remote Learning Behaviour Agreement. We have ensured that our procedures regarding remote learning and video technology are fully compliant with GDPR regulations and take account of guidance issued by the NSPCC and the professional teaching associations.

Students

When logging onto a lesson from home, we expect our students to:

- turn their web camera **off** and their microphone on to **mute**.
- **not record** the session or cause it to be recorded.
- seek help from the teacher by using the "**hands up**" button.
- **report** any issues or concerns directly to my parent/teacher/school.
- not have any other person present during the session, except for a parent/carer who is responsible for supervision in the family home.
- **attend** all Live Teams lessons scheduled unless parents have notified the school.
 - aim to be positive, adequately prepared and participate fully in the online lesson.
 - choose a sensible place to work from - ideally a living room or shared quiet space at home
 - have all the equipment (pen, exercise book, equipment, calculator etc.) they need in advance, so that they do not need to leave and interrupt the flow of the lesson.
 - understand that a Teams lessons will be subject to the same school rules which apply in face to face lessons.

Parents/Carers

We expect our parents/carers to support the use of remote learning by:

- supporting their child in using the equipment and application safely and appropriately
- not recording the session or cause it to be recorded.
- not distracting or detracting from their child's learning during the session.
- understanding that the school will take action if they have any concerns regarding parent or student behaviour or inappropriate use of the equipment/software.
- complying with the school's acceptable use policy as well as this remote learning behaviour agreement
- contacting the school in the normal way, stating the reason, if their child is unable to attend a Live Teams lesson
- be mindful that anything in the background of the Teams lesson might be heard within the session by staff.
- contacting the safeguarding team at school immediately with any safeguarding concern

Teachers

Our teachers will use the equipment and software safely and appropriately, and will turn on their web camera only when it is appropriate in the lesson but will not show other students in class (there may be exceptions for sixth form students with the consent of all students). They will **not record** the lesson. They will report any safeguarding or behaviour concerns in the normal way.

Please click on the link in the letter above to electronically give your consent