



16 October 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

General update – Covid-19, Personal Development Day this week, curriculum plans for home learning, sixth form open evening and prospectus, website, changes to ParentPay, optional PE shop, Lincolnshire Tech & Innovation Awards

I hope my weekly update letter finds you well as the third week in October is upon us and we approach half term. In the past seven days, we have seen mounting national Covid infections, a new tiered set of Covid restrictions and much talk of ‘circuit breaks.’

Covid-19

As I write, the infection rate in North Kesteven has risen dramatically yet again, as has the national average. When I last wrote to you, there were 57 cases per 100,000 people. It now stands at 90 cases. The national average is 93, which has also risen dramatically. What is more concerning is the infection rate in Lincoln itself. This now stands at 113 cases per 100,000, well above even national average. Given this data, a number of parents have contacted the Academy asking if we will be operating a ‘circuit break’ around half term. Government guidelines stipulate that we continue as we are with no plans for a longer half term. Clearly, should their approach change rapidly I will inform you of our plans. For now, status quo. In addition, we remain an area of medium risk under the government’s new tiered restrictions which means that, at the time of writing, nothing changes for now.

In addition to this, as you are aware we operate a policy of staff and students wearing masks in all communal areas. Support and compliance with this has been overwhelmingly positive as we tackle the virus. Sadly, a small number of parents do not support this approach with one telling me this week “it isn’t the law.” It is here. The latest statutory guidance gives Head Teachers local powers, with the support of their governing bodies, to do as the setting requires. We require this measure to keep everyone as safe as we can, to remain open and effective and to keep it so. We are now in a position to supply a small number of disposable masks to students without one. These can be purchased on the Academy site using ParentPay. Thank you for your support as we battle on against this dreadful disease.

Once again, if any parents have any concerns at all, please contact us at the Academy using the email address COVID@srpa.co.uk. This will make it directly to me where I will be able to help and will do my best to prioritise your concern.

Personal Development Day this week

Wednesday was a super example of how we develop young minds for the next steps in their educational journeys. You can see just what youngsters were up to via our social media accounts. Mr Griffiths did a great job of pulling this day together, our first of the new academic

year, given the Covid restrictions in place. We look forward to five more across the year on a variety of themes.

Curriculum plans for home learning

We have taken the decision to move this content from the home page of the website to Frog. This is because our materials are in high demand; they were open access. We have tried to be collegiate and supportive of colleagues needing help in this area but now we need to ensure our youngsters receive the best deal. This will take effect from next week.

Sixth form open evening and prospectus

The sixth form open evening will take place as a virtual event on Wednesday 4 November. Given the strange nature of 2020, we will soon be launching a Frog microsite which will contain all of the relevant information. We will also be producing some video content for current Year 11 students and their families in order to support their decision making. Youngsters will receive their sixth form prospectus before half term in order to support the process. Mr Griffiths will be in touch with more details in the coming days but, should you have any queries or questions, please contact him at jgriffiths@srpa.co.uk.

Website

I am in the middle of a full website redesign as the current incarnation is looking tired and old. With that in mind, I am updating as much content as I can so that the new site will be ready to build and will be easier to navigate. This week, we have launched a new section of the website entitled 'Supporting learning at SRPA.' We realise that the move to digital homework has caused the need for many different logins and reading homework timetables in such a large school can be like deciphering hieroglyphics. It is hoped that this additional section will prove useful. This can be found under the **Parent** tab.

Changes to ParentPay

We have added a few more items to the menu on ParentPay so that stationery/calculators, etc can also be purchased online for collection in school. Please take a look at this via your account for further information. We will keep adding to this in due course.

Optional PE Shop

Due to the time of year and the weather beginning to turn cooler, we now have an optional PE club shop for the purchase of additional, yet optional items. Whilst the compulsory PE kit is all available from Uniform Direct in the usual way, optional items can also be purchased via



Head Teacher: Mr D. J. Hardy BA (Hons) PGCE
Moor Lane, North Hykeham, Lincoln. LN6 9AF
☎ 01522 882020 📠 01522 880660
✉ enquiries@srpa.co.uk 🌐 www.srpa.co.uk
Company Registration No: 07690250

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<https://srpa.bolampremiersportswear.co.uk>. The password is **SRPAPE**. This kit is particularly useful for any of our KS4 and 5 elite sport groups who wish to stand out and spend more time than most in the PE faculty. None of it is designed to replace our existing PE kit but may be handy as we get to winter, especially given delays in online orders via Uniform Direct recently. For full information on this please go to <https://www.srpa.co.uk/for-parents/our-uniform/> and click on **Sports Kit Update - September 2020**.

Lincolnshire Tech & Innovation Awards

I am delighted to be able to inform you that the Academy won the Young Entrepreneur Award at the above awards ceremony last night for the work of our Young Enterprise Initiative last academic year. Solare's vision of supplying ethically sustainable clothing saw them clean sweep the county Young Enterprise Awards in the summer and place nationally in the sustainability category. It is another feather in Jamie Moffatt's cap that he has led the team to yet another prestigious award with excellent support from Mrs Myers. Well done to all involved.

As we approach the end of our penultimate week before half term, it is clear that the world has changed even since we returned to school in September. This half term has been the most tiring on record and my whole staff team are doing a cracking job staying positive, being resilient and ensuring our youngsters get the best education we can provide in challenging times. It is far from easy working in bubbles, especially when you have to cart your teaching kit, books, laptop and assorted paraphernalia around our sprawling campus. Regardless, we will stand firm and continue to keep a watchful eye on the infection rates locally for the time when we may need to act swiftly should the government change direction.

As I sign off in a week where I have worked more hours than ever before, it would be easy to be grumpy and feel a little world-weary. Now is not the time for that. Instead I leave you with a quote from Anne Frank: "In the long run, the sharpest weapon of all is a kind and gentle spirit. Where there's hope, there's life. It fills us with fresh courage and makes us strong again. Whoever is happy will make others happy."

Have a happy weekend when it finally arrives.

I will write again soon.

Yours faithfully



Mr D Hardy
Head Teacher



Head Teacher: Mr D. J. Hardy BA (Hons) PGCE
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