



20 November 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

General update – Covid-19, Buildings and infrastructure, Online curriculum, Sixth Form applications & second live Q&A

As we approach the end of the third week back from October half term and with another four weeks to go until the Christmas holidays, we are clearly in the middle of a proper scrap, to use a crass phrase. After last week, where we sent home part of two year groups, we were forced to do the same earlier this week with Year 9 too. Two thirds of all secondary schools have now been forced to send home youngsters to self-isolate since September and the rate at which this statistic is changing is incredible. In addition, many are finding the escalating costs of supply due to isolating staff a real challenge. We have fared quite well so far due to careful, prudent planning and a huge amount of good luck but, as the government has steadfastly refused to refund these burgeoning costs, no amount of crystal ball gazing can help here.

Covid-19

As I write, the infection rate in North Kesteven has risen yet again, as has the national average. When I last wrote to you, there were 265 cases per 100,000 people. It now stands at 306 cases. The national average is 316. The infection rate in Lincoln has risen too. This now stands at 435 cases per 100,000. The last time I wrote it stood at 312. In fact, the county of Lincolnshire as a whole now has 360 cases per 100,000. I offer you this small comparative national table:

Area	Covid-19 infection rate per 100,000
Newcastle upon Tyne	439
Lincoln	435
Derby	387
Birmingham	378
Manchester	356
North Kesteven	306
Liverpool	262
Newark and Sherwood	242

Given the media furore in recent weeks about the larger conurbations and their Covid-19 challenges it will be interesting to see what arrangements come into play in our county prior to Christmas if the national lockdown comes to an end. Clearly, the city rate is one to watch, especially as we are sited so close by.

If any parents have any concerns at all related to Covid-19 in school, 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.

Buildings and infrastructure

We are nearing the end of our roofing project now with just two small areas to complete on the three-storey block. The CCTV installations are well underway and it is hoped we will be fully functional by Christmas with ninety new cameras, inside and outside, which are state of the art. I have finally agreed the full specification for our fencing and gates project and it is hoped we will see a commencement of this project prior to the Christmas break.

In addition, the work on our new website is progressing well. This will offer greater functionality in all areas and will be a fairer representation of the Academy's work as we enter 2021. In addition, I am working with my technical team to install a new state of the art phone system in the coming weeks and months. As a larger than average school, we need to ensure that our systems and services keep up as we rapidly grow and we need to serve the needs of more students, parents and external agencies. This ongoing work will allow this to come to fruition and is well overdue.

Now that inspection is behind us for now and Covid is upon us, I am seeing this as a year to consolidate, offer as much normality as I can and to further extend services as the academic year advances so that we fully meet need.

Online curriculum

This has not stood still over the last few months and is of very high quality – for example and by means of update:

- The Home Learning Plans themselves now include a section dedicated to outlining the additional online resources that students can access, such as Mathswatch and Educake. Many of these online platforms do offer a range of activities that are marked automatically to give students instant feedback and to help them identify strengths and areas for further development. You will find this information on the final two pages of the Home Learning Plan document.
- As you are aware already, we have added a Year 11 Revision microsite to FROG, which can be accessed at the bottom of a student's homepage on FROG or by typing 'year 11 revision' into the search bar. Here, you will find a wealth of resources, included pre-recorded PowerPoints talking through revision strategies and how to prepare for examinations in English, mathematics and science. In addition, our Personal Development day focused on examination preparation. All resources used can be found on this microsite.



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- Each subject has its own FROG page that can be accessed via the links on the Year 11 Revision microsite. Here you will find further detail of resources to support students. These include links to past examination papers, video lessons, and annotated PowerPoints amongst other resources.

Sixth Form applications & second live Q&A

We will still be accepting applications for entry into the Sixth Form in September 2021 during the month of November with the deadline being 27th. We have simplified the application form, which was emailed to all students and parents.

We will be holding another live Q&A next week on the evening of Wednesday 25 November to coincide with the closing of the application process. Sign ups are showing good numbers. I look forward to seeing you there virtually.

The Frog microsite can be accessed here: <https://vle.srpa.co.uk/virtual-6th-form-open-day/home>. Should you have any questions about applying for a sixth form place, please contact Mr Griffiths at jgriffiths@srpa.co.uk or via sixthform@srpa.co.uk.

At times like this when the country is in some form of lockdown, yet we are operating as normal and in difficult times, it can be easy to lose a sense of perspective as to the valuable service we offer. I see constant streams of comment on the news, social media and in the papers about teaching, teachers and the role they play. Much of it is not very complimentary. At times like this I find it best to remember the words of Mother Teresa in her 'Dream Mother' quote and remind myself of my unerring purpose:

“You will teach them to fly,
 But they will not fly your flight.
 You will teach them to dream,
 But they will not dream your dream.
 You will teach them to live,
 But they will not live your life.
 Nevertheless, in every flight,
 In every life, in every dream,
 The print of the way you taught
 Will always remain.”



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Have a lovely weekend when it comes.

I will write again soon.

Yours faithfully



Mr D Hardy
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