



April 3rd 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope that you and your families are staying fit and well under these challenging circumstances. I'm a great believer that situations can bring the best out of people and so far, I have only seen the best from our Bridgewater High community and therefore I would like to thank you all for your support, understanding and feedback. "Feedback" in fact, is probably the hottest topic of the week. We are confident that the content set online over the last two weeks has been fit for purpose as a starting point. But we know that there have been issues over:

- The sheer quantity of work set
- The nature of feedback to students
- The levels of "interactivity"

This week we have worked really hard to address these and will continue to do so. Under normal circumstances I would be celebrating the innovation shown by colleagues. However, notwithstanding the difficult times that are driving this innovation, I still do appreciate the way in which staff and students have risen to the challenge. To this end we have provided staff with more training so that they can:

- systematically upload audio files providing whole class feedback
- utilise Youtube more confidently, such as Year Assemblies
- record their computer desktops to provide more "live" commentaries for students
- use self-marking tests more regularly
- use visualisers more effectively as the equivalent of a "whiteboard" online

We are using video conferencing extensively across the school and the Trust at all levels and are taking advantage of the record functions too. However, at the moment we are not intending to move to full scale "live" teaching as we need to evaluate fully the security and safeguarding issues surrounding these online platforms.

Alongside our curriculum continuity plans have been our pastoral continuity strategies. These include:

- weekly assemblies and sessions for PSHE and Personal Development
- regular follow up to any welfare issues, logged through welfare@bridgewaterhigh.com including over Easter
- PAMs and PALs monitoring engagement with SMHW and following up on concerns and successes

From a planning perspective, we are reaping the benefits of being part of a tight-knit Trust which is allowing us to coordinate our efforts more efficiently. As a school and as a Trust our priorities are:

- continuing to safeguard all our students especially the most vulnerable
- evolving the quality of our online learning whilst leading the school in a virtual environment
- responding to Ofqual's advice for GCSEs which is imminent we are told; we will update you accordingly
- establishing a position on assessment for all year groups that is fit for purpose
- planning transition for both KS2/3 and KS4/5, potentially using "bridging units"
- planning strategies for Y10 in the medium and long term to address any gaps in learning
- providing Careers Education, Advice and Information online to Y11 in particular
- addressing potential inequalities that may emerge through any "digital divide" where students can't get online.

Some parents have asked what is expected from students over Easter. Easter is an opportunity, where appropriate, to consolidate any learning that has taken place over the last two weeks. Where practical and relevant some subjects may also provide Enrichment or Extension activities through SMHW titled **Optional Easter Work** which will appear in pink. However, the daily setting of lessons is suspended till we return from Easter.

Finally, I appreciate there is a lot to digest in this letter, but at least we have some time now to reflect and so on behalf of everyone here may I wish you a happy and healthy Easter break.

Yours sincerely,

Tim Long, Principal