



# NEWSLETTER



8 January 2021 Term 1 Week 1

**Weekly Message from the Headteacher: Mr Ellis**

Happy New Year!

We ended term 2 on a real high note; raising a significant sum of money for the Youth Counselling Project with our Christmas jumpers day and we finished the last day of term with Mr Purdey's festive quiz. Going round school on the last Friday, you could have heard the proverbial pin drop as students *and staff* were hanging on Mr Purdey's every word. This could become a 'new' Christmas tradition even when we live in a world without teaching 'zones' or 'bubbles'.



There has been a number of important announcements over the holiday period and at the start of this week. On Thursday last, 31 December, I sent home another joint communication from the Director of Public Health and the Director of Children Services, regarding the introduction of mass testing. This sets out a sensible position and, although staff are currently receiving training to deliver tests and we are looking at the logistics of how this could be managed, we will not be rushing into the roll out of mass testing. We know that the measures we put in place for terms 1 and 2 were extremely effective. I would like to reassure parents and carers that even if mass testing was fully established at the school, the systems that have served us so well would be maintained.

The other key announcements this week related to our students in Years 11 and Year 13. Although we haven't received the detail, it has been confirmed that the summer examinations are cancelled and students will be graded through teacher assessment. I would like to apologise for the uncertainty this has generated but would reassure our students that they are in a really good place and must continue in this positive manner. The mock examinations that have been calendared will still take place, as they provide a good opportunity for our students to display their knowledge and understanding. Although at this stage in the calendar we talk about 'predicted grades', the teacher assessments will need to go through a moderation process so teachers will not be able to offer any guarantees regarding final grades. Our Years 11 and 13 have been outstanding this year and would have performed really well if the summer examinations had taken place. It would have been unfair on students in the worst affected parts of the country for the examinations to have gone ahead but I would like to reassure our students that if they continue to work hard, they will secure equally positive outcomes through whatever assessment arrangements are finally confirmed. Parents and carers of students in Years 11 and 13 will have the opportunity to 'meet' teachers at this month's PCE events.

Students in all year groups have made an excellent start to remote learning and it's apparent that our technological skills *staff and students* have really developed since the last lockdown. Being on line for the whole of the day does present a new set of challenges and we are here to support parents/carers if any safeguarding or

well-being issues do emerge. The structure of the school day is very similar to that which students would experience on site, so they should not be on-line into the evening; they should have plenty of time for family and exercise. All our systems of support are still in place, so please don't hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions or concerns. Teaching and Learning enquiries should be directed to Mr Waite ([Jonwaite@seafordhead.org](mailto:Jonwaite@seafordhead.org)) whilst any well-being issues can be discussed with your child's Director of Learning or the Student Services team. For the small number of students who are on site, all the 'Hands, Face, Space' controls are being maintained and they have made a good start to working through the on-line work from their designated classrooms.

Even in these unusual circumstances, it is lovely to be able to welcome a new member of staff onto the team. Ms Martin is our new Head of PE and is desperately keen to further develop sports provision at the school. Physical exercise is even more important at the moment and I hope that all our students are building exercise into their daily routines. We also welcome Miss Wells and Mrs Feneron back into school from maternity leave as the Director of Learning for Year 8 and the Head of Technology respectively; Miss Novitt will now be the Director of Learning for Year 9.

**Headteacher's Stars of the Week: - Oscar Cao, Nia Waite, Ethan Trunfull, Larissa Hardy, Jaeli Tan, Luke Jackson, Sophie Geering, Natalia Gorkalo, Piper Davies, Tom Egan – The Can Do Attitude Key**

At the end of term 2 we had the chance to look at our biggest House points winners and our stars this week are the ten highest achievers from Year 7. Theirs is a staggering achievement as between them they had amassed 2000 House points before Christmas. On average, these students were identified almost three times every single day for achieving something worthy of a school reward. They should feel extremely proud of themselves and I am looking forward to the time when I can present them with their Keys to Success. We will continue to reward our students for their efforts on line and their engagement in remote learning tasks. I will be highlighting our ten stars from Year 8 in next week's newsletter.



**WELL DONE!!!**