



8<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we come to the end of the first week of the new lockdown, I would like to say thank you for the positive feedback you have given our schools about how we are supporting our pupils and students and families. Staff, teaching and non teaching are working hard to handle everything thrown at us from testing programmes to hub provision to distance learning.

We have put in place high quality distance learning systems for all three schools. It's vitally important that children keep learning and our expectations that they will complete the work set to the best of their ability is clear. We are working hard to make sure all our children have access to IT where this has been a problem before. With exams not happening in the summer, for Year 11 in particular, every piece of work and assessment in their books and online is vital if we are to provide accurate grades for them.

In addition to remote learning, we are running a hub provision for children of critical workers and those considered vulnerable. We have learned a significant amount from the last nine months so the systems and protocols we had in previous lockdowns will simply start up again. There is a coordinated approach to providing free school meals and vouchers or food parcels are being sent out.

Beacon Hill and Solway have run a very successful pilot testing programme - thank you to everyone who took part, and especially the students who behaved with such maturity and good sense. I must pay tribute to the Fire and Rescue officers who supported us magnificently. We also tested all staff at Richmond Hill school. We will continue to test all staff and students over 11 who are in school on a weekly basis as part of the national programme and will contact parents of those attending the hub separately.

Schools have moved to online provision to support Public Health as infection rates rise and hospitals are under increasing pressure. These are extraordinarily difficult times and therefore I urge you to ensure your children remain at home, working. I appreciate this is not always easy but we have a joint responsibility to support each other and reduce the risk to everyone in our communities.

Please do not hesitate to contact the school offices if you have any questions and we will do our best to help. I hope you all remain safe and well through the next few weeks.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'J. Schafer'.

Judith Schafer

Executive Headteacher

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