

Lincoln Castle Academy

Letter to LCA Parents from Mrs Laming, Headteacher

28th April 2020

Dear Parents & Carers,

Thank you for your support and kindness during this period; your comments and feedback have been overwhelming, providing a wonderful 'lift' for our staff during this time. In recognising the lengths they are going to, you have not only made us feel appreciated by our community, you have motivated and energized the LCA team at this difficult time and I am enormously grateful. The 'wordle' at the end of this letter will be displayed in our school reception.

A few updates:

It's school, but not as we know it...

We continue to be very busy, adapting to new ways of working. The majority of our staff are working from home, with a small team in school each day on a rota supervising the children of key workers. This team also responds to enquiries and issues laptops to students. Whilst in school, this team also organise regular food parcels to support LCA families facing hardship. These deliveries are in addition to the government's voucher scheme and something staff have chosen to do. The Site Team, IT staff and Cleaning staff are in school ensuring the IT servers and site are maintained during 'lockdown' and undertaking a thorough clean ahead of our return.

Teaching and Learning...

- We continue to set the majority of work on a Monday to avoid SMHW 'pinging' throughout the week. We hope this is better for students and parents?
- Students are sending work to teachers for marking and feedback and rewards are issued for engagement and excellence. Over 10,000 reward points have been issued to students whilst in lockdown!
- Staff 'showcase' excellent work on the LCA Facebook page (if you do not have FB, scroll down to the bottom of the LCA webpage to see these fabulous posts).
- Teams are working to ensure a fair and robust process in awarding 'centre-assessed grades' to Year 11 and Year 13 students.
- Year 13 and Year 7 Parents' Evenings have been replaced with written reports (coming soon).
- The Year 8 Options process has been completed online.
- All our teams are operating using regular 'Zoom' meetings.
- There have been over 1000 communications with students and 500 with parents whilst running our 'virtual school'.

Safeguarding & welfare Support...

Our safeguarding remit continues with daily check-ins, phone calls and referrals. We continue to work with other agencies to ensure students and families receive support as required.

This moment in history is encouraging all of us to think about 'education' in its broadest sense. You will be educating your child in many ways: providing valuable lessons in personal resilience, how to cope under pressure and family values, not to mention life skills such as home baking, family exercise and arts and crafts. Many parents are finding structured working mornings work well, along with a shared family workspace with rewards/incentives scheduled for the afternoon. Take comfort in the fact that even teachers can find home schooling their children challenging, so I urge parents not to be too hard on yourselves!

LCA staff and Governors are giving careful consideration to the shape of the school day when we eventually re-open. We are considering the mental health implications of this sudden unexpected change and the side blow issued to our Year 11 and Year 13 students preparing for exams. We recognise that our new Year 7 and Year 12 students will need additional transition support and the curriculum for Year 10 and Year 12 will be modified to plug gaps ahead of exams. Whilst we do not yet have a date for re-opening, this forward planning is underway so we are prepared. Whether we re-open fully or have a phased return with some year groups only, there are many issues to be overcome, none greater than the health & safety of your precious children and our staff.

Children need adults to bring certainty and security at a time like this; the repeated media speculation is unhelpful to say the least. When we have information, we will communicate in an open transparent fashion. If, in the meantime you have questions/comments, please get in touch using: enquiries@lincolncastleacademy.co.uk.

Finally, a thank you to all our key worker 'superhero' parents. Keep going, we appreciate everything you are doing for our country and our children.

Take care,

Mrs Laming
Headteacher