



12 February 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

I wanted to write to celebrate you and your children's successes over the last half-term during this most recent national lockdown. Your endeavours and tenacity in supporting both on-site and remote learning has made such a difference! Thank you from all of us at Weavers Academy.

Students have been absolutely awesome during this lockdown and their high levels of engagement have absolutely astounded us all. I am always proud of them and am humbled by their continued fortitude.

Colleagues on-site and online have observed students at their very best. Young people have continued to do their very best and have diligently applied themselves to work. Staff know it has not always been easy but have noticed the excellent attitudes displayed by the students to the challenges. They all want to say to you *'well done and keep going'*.

Students have shown themselves able to communicate effectively and to adapt quickly to the use of new technologies in order to continue learning. Teachers have been delighted by students' responses in the 'breakout rooms' and the 'chat' during online lessons.

Mrs Underwood, Assistant Principal and the team of English teachers have been overwhelmed with the mature attitudes shown during live lessons and the inspirational assignments completed by students. One staff member reported the rapid development and improvement they had seen in the communication skills of students. Another said simply *"when I see and hear their responses on line, I am so proud of them all"*. We all feel this way too.

Our arts, drama and music teams have developed engaging 'creative isolation' activities in this new online world. They have worked diligently to provide a range of practical activities for students to access during live lessons.

In drama Year 7 have explored what it is like to stay in an old mansion. Year 8 have developed character profiles and Year 9 have written their own monologues. Students in Years 10 and 11 have got into costume as a favourite Puritan character from 'The Crucible' and using gestures inspired by British Sign Language have devised their own work.

Drama teachers have gone one step further. They teamed up with the health and nutrition teachers and tasked Year 9 students with giving them 'stage directions' during an online lesson as to 'how they should butter their bread'. With much fun, laughter and high levels of engagement students realised the importance of giving clear directions to achieve a specific goal. This new knowledge was then linked to the importance of good communication in any interaction such as in staging dramatic productions.



The geography team also want to say a massive “well done” to students. They have been especially impressed by the unfailing enthusiasm shown by Year 7 students in lessons. Even in groups of over 100 students the vast majority have responded to every question in the ‘chat’. There has been an excellent level of debate during the virtual discussions online. Students have been really keen to help each other by posting ‘screenshots’, helping to fix technical issues when they arose and giving ‘thumbs up’ and 😊 emojis to encourage their peers when they were presenting. Real support from a great team working hard to succeed. We are all very proud of the young people particularly in the way that they have supported each other.

Science teachers want to add their congratulations and say “well done” to all students, and particularly to those in Years 7 and 8 who have been diligently completing their assignments online over the last two weeks. However, if you or they feel that they have not yet learned what was intended and would like more support from their teachers then please contact the team at:

[kirstin.mcrae.smith@weaversacademy.org.uk](mailto:kirstin.mcrae.smith@weaversacademy.org.uk).

We congratulate our Year 10 students who have displayed high levels of motivation towards their studies with some students achieving 100% attendance to online lessons! What an achievement! Well done.

We have continued to pay attention to students’ personal development during the pandemic in a number of ways including through continuing with tutorial sessions. These sessions have really brought it home to us how much the students are missing their teachers and each other. We all miss the students and can’t wait for their return to school!

Pastoral mentoring has continued virtually for students and our pastoral team, including our school counsellors who worked tirelessly to make sure that support was there when it was needed. One member of staff told me that it has brought them immense joy to see both the personal development and the academic achievements of the individuals that they have been working with this half-term.

Thinking to the future, Mrs McCarthy school careers adviser has continued her work. During recent meetings with students in Year 11 she noted that many showed great positivity, understanding, resilience and a new found commitment to their futures and their future study. She felt humbled by students’ responses: *‘students told me that they were going to work hard; the situation was nobody’s fault and that we just needed to keep going... and we were all in this together!’* Our students - your children – have demonstrated **huge tenacity**. Their perspective on the challenges we have faced and how to overcome them has been an inspiration to all of us who work at the school and we really wanted you to know this.



I want to specifically praise our senior students in Years 12 and 13. They have been exemplary in their learning, completed all work asked of them in a timely manner, asked for help when needed and listened to and acted on advice given. Students have continued to apply themselves to their studies under the most difficult circumstances. Groups have maintained a great sense of humour throughout and the witty exchanges with their teachers have been brilliant and often inspirational. It is tremendous to know that many are aspiring to university to study and are looking positively towards their futures. We would like to congratulate all students in the Sixth Form for their continuing commitment. We are all immensely proud of their achievements and we continue to wish them well as they press ahead with their studies.

Mr Higgins had this to say to all students: *'As Superman said "**A hero is an ordinary individual who finds the strength to persevere and endure in spite of overwhelming obstacles**". You are all heroes in your own ways. Through the support that you have given to each other and the resilience, hard work and clear determination shown to overcome adversity you have positively impacted on your learning and will succeed'*. I totally agree.

Thank you for the many positive comments that you have shared with the school about our teachers and support professionals. Thank you for recognising their efforts. They are a tremendous group of people who really care about our community.

We wish you all a restful half-term. You may have a few moments to relax and enjoy the **'Weavers Academy Lockdown Playlist'** which is available on the school website.

Please continue to take care and remember that we are extremely proud and grateful to you all for your support this half-term.

Yours sincerely

Vivien Swaida  
**Principal**