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Thursday 2 July 2020

Dear Parent / Carer

Principal's Introduction

I am writing to introduce myself as the new Principal at Caister Academy, starting in September. I will be taking over from Ann Bridges, our current Principal, who as you are aware, retires at the end of this academic year.

Having trained as a teacher at Caister High School eighteen years ago, I am delighted to be re-joining the community, and to have the opportunity to serve the area that my family and friends choose to call home.

Over the last few months, I have been working with staff to plan for the long term future of the school. This initial letter is focused on that long term. I will write to you separately regarding any short term changes we make due to the ongoing coronavirus situation.

Core Values

Our core values are at the heart of everything we do. They are central to the decisions we make about your child's education, guide the aspirations we have for them and define the quality of learning we provide.

From September, these guiding values will be Ambition, Opportunity, Character and Community.

Over the autumn term, it will become clearer how these core values will translate to student outcomes, experiences and expectations. In the meantime, I wanted to update you with some of the changes we have agreed, that will support us as we move forward.

Curriculum

The opportunity to learn about different cultures and the ability to communicate in other languages will remain vital elements of our broad curriculum. However, personalisation and the engagement promoted through choice are also areas we want to develop further. With this in mind:

- It will no longer be compulsory for students to study German at Key Stage 4.
- Students will be offered a preference of French, German or Spanish when joining the school and will be given the choice of whether to continue learning a language at Key Stage 4.
- To encourage those with a passion for languages, the option of learning more than one language at Key Stage 4 will be available.

Structure of the Academy Day

Form Time

It is important that all students arrive at school on time, fully prepared and ready to learn. To support this, we are moving form time, from after lunch to the beginning of the school day. This will give form tutors the time to ensure we are maintaining consistently high expectations, and students the opportunity to receive pastoral and academic support, ready for lessons.

Lunchtime

We are fortunate that our site lends itself to an easy separation of learning and social areas. Due to this, we are going to split lunch into two sittings, at 12.20pm and 1.20pm. This is a common practice in schools where dining spaces are relatively small. The benefits should include shorter queuing times and greater access to social and study spaces. I am hopeful that with this change, more students will take the opportunity to enjoy a hot meal at lunchtime.

In addition, following feedback from staff, we are intending to shorten the length of lunch from 50 to 40 minutes. With the smaller sittings, this will still allow students ample time to eat their lunch and prepare for afternoon lessons. The benefit will be an earlier finish to Period 5, of 3.00pm, making it easier for students to stay for after school study or clubs which will run every day until at least 4.00pm. Due to the option to stay after school, we cannot foresee any negative impact upon childcare, but would appreciate feedback to your child's Year Guidance Manager, if you feel there is something we have not considered.

Returning to School in September

I am conscious that some of the changes described in this letter may need to be altered on a short term basis, depending on government guidance for coronavirus. However, I felt it was important that you were kept informed of our longer term plans, not just adjustments we are making for this current time.

The latest government direction is that all students will return to schools in September. Further guidance is expected imminently, before confirmation in August. Over the summer, we will be planning to ensure a safe return. We will share full details of exactly how this will work, with further adjustments, prior to students starting.

To support this planning for the return to school, I would appreciate your feedback on your child's progress over the recent time and as such, invite you to complete the survey attached here.

[Student Well-being Survey.](#)

I am very much looking forward to joining Caister Academy fully; meeting you and your child and working together with staff, students and parents to ensure their future success. In the meantime, I will write to you in a few weeks with further updates for September, including to welcome the other new staff who will be joining us.

Please do not hesitate to contact staff at the Academy in the usual way if you have any queries at this time. I look forward to being in touch again soon.

Yours faithfully



Mr Ben Driver
Principal Designate

Enclosed: Structure of the Academy Day - (Appendix 1)

Structure of the Academy Day

This structure is subject to short term adjustments, based upon government guidance for coronavirus.

Time	Session	
	First Lunch <i>Years 7, 8 and 9</i>	Second Lunch <i>Years 10 and 11</i>
8.00am	<i>Breakfast</i>	
8:40am	Form Time	
9:00am	Period 1	
10:00am	Period 2	
11:00am	Break	
11:20pm	Period 3	
12:20pm	Lunch	Period 4
1.00pm	Period 4	
1:20pm		Lunch
2.00pm	Period 5	
3:00pm	<i>Period 6 / After school clubs</i>	

To ensure lessons start promptly a warning bell is rung five minutes before Form Time and the end of break and lunch.

The lunch sitting that year groups attend is subject to change, based upon cohort size and time of the year. For example, during examination periods the relevant year group will normally attend First Lunch.

Before and after school:

- Breakfast is available in the dining hall every day from 8.00am to 8.30am.
- Students must be on site by **8.35am**.
- After school clubs, activities and quiet study spaces are available every day until at least 4.00pm. Further details can be found on the termly published enrichment schedule.