



# HOWDEN SCHOOL

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Headteacher: Mr G Cannon

18 December 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

## End of Term Letter – Autumn 2020

Can I take the opportunity to thank all parents and carers in supporting the school through the Autumn term. Although the Howden area has seen some of the highest infection rates in the Yorkshire and Humber regions, our attendance has remained at least ten percent above national averages and our school attendance is currently in-line with previous academic years. I thank you for trusting us in keeping your child safe in school. The numerous positive emails, notes and letters thanking us have been most welcome and really helped us as a school.

One of our five school objectives is to create individuals who are resilient and this current situation has certainly tested that. On a daily basis, students at Howden School are showing their resilience. They have quickly adapted to the new structure of the day, new routines and differing approaches to teaching and learning.

I would also like to take the opportunity to thank the staff. In the first 14 weeks we have seen staff attendance at an all-time high. The first term has been a steep learning curve for us all but the feedback we are getting from students and parents/carers tells us that as a school we are getting it right. The staff at Howden School have worked diligently, professionally and tirelessly which has meant we have been able to stay open for all students

### NEET Figures

In early November, we received the figures showing the percentage of our students who had progressed into education or employment with training at the end of the 2020 academic year. If a student is not in education, employment with training they are classed as NEET. I am delighted to report that 99% of our students are not NEET. Our vision as a school is to work as a team to ensure students are successful and make a positive contribution to society. Having 99% of our students in education or employment with training indicates that we are successful in achieving this aspect of our vision.

### Vocab Express

This term, Howden School celebrated success in the international Vocab Express competition for English speaking schools throughout the world, competing against some of the top private and international schools. Howden School finished in first place overall but also had wins in French, Spanish, Russian, Polish and Portuguese. In addition, 4 Howden pupils took the first 4 individual awards too, gaining 'Grandmaster' status. Congratulations go to Grace, Nikita, Paige and Martyna. Here is an excerpt from the press release:

*"I am delighted to see the school punching above its weight in an international competition with virtually all the schools being significantly larger than us. This performance in an international competition shows our commitment to developing modern foreign languages in the school". Mr Cannon, Headteacher at Howden School, added "We have over doubled the number of students taking GCSE languages and with our links with the Confucius Institute we will be able to offer Mandarin Chinese from year 7 onwards"*

### **Staffing update**

In January 2021, two long serving staff will be leaving us either to retire or seek a new lifestyle. Mrs Jackie Gray who is the attendance officer, is retiring after many years' service at the school. Mr Mark Storey, one of our science teachers, is looking to make a complete change in his life by sailing his yacht around Britain and Europe. They have both been loyal and fantastic servants to the school, its staff and students and we wish them every success in life.

We will be joined by Mrs Tamsin Hillyard as second in English and Mrs Jenny Guest in Science. We look forward to welcoming them to Team Howden and know they will bring great things to their departments.

### **School Uniform**

The Christmas break is always a good time for checking and refreshing school uniform and equipment. Please make sure that students are well equipped and their uniform is correct (in-line with our school uniform policy) and ready for the Spring term.

### **Reporting Positive COVID-19 Cases during the Christmas Holiday**

Please make note of the arrangements for reporting any positive cases during the holiday period:

- Where a pupil tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), having developed symptoms more than 48 hours since being in school (after 3.30pm on Sunday 20 December), the school should not be contacted. Parents and carers should instead follow the contact tracing instructions provided by NHS Test and Trace and further information can be found at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/> or by calling 119.
- Until 3.30pm on 24 December, if a pupil tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), having developed symptoms within 48 hours of being in school (in other words the symptoms started prior to 3.30pm on Sunday 20 December) the school needs to assist in identifying close contacts and advising self-isolation, as the individual may have been infectious whilst in school. If this is the case, please let the school know by emailing us: [office@howdenschool.net](mailto:office@howdenschool.net) The email account will be checked daily up to and including Christmas Eve. We will then contact anyone identified as a close contact.
- After 3.30pm on 24 December parents should only contact NHS Test and Trace and not the school. Please see out infographic attached to this letter for more detail.

### **Supporting our East Riding Families in times of hardship**

We are aware that some families are struggling financially. We know that the last year has been extremely hard and those families who perhaps have not previously faced financial hardship are now struggling to make ends meet as a result of furlough, unemployment or other issues, and are worrying about how to keep warm and fed over the coming months. East Riding Council has put services in place to support families who find themselves in this position. Their Welfare Visiting team can help with a range of support, from helping to increase weekly or monthly income by making sure that they are getting all the benefits you may be entitled to, check if you can get help to reduce your council tax and rent bills, they can help with budgeting and if you are in debt their

team can help with this too. Previous families who have used this service cannot recommend them highly enough and last year alone they helped residents claim an additional £3.7 million in additional benefits. This is a FREE service and completely confidential. If you need help with this, please visit the website <https://www.eastriding.gov.uk/housing/housing-benefit-and-council-tax-support/welfare-visiting-team/>

### **Parent Governor Vacancy**

We have a vacancy for a Parent Governor for our Local Governing Board. We are looking for parents who:

- can commit to attending five meetings a year
- can understand and digest reports prior to these meetings
- have a keen eye for detail
- will be ready to challenge the school's Leadership Team
- are enthusiastic about making a difference to the lives of our young people

If this sounds like something that would interest you, please contact Gilly Stafford, Clerk to the Trust email [gilly.stafford@consortiumtrust.co.uk](mailto:gilly.stafford@consortiumtrust.co.uk) for more information.

In the meantime, I would like to extend the collective appreciation to you all, from all our team here at Howden School, for the astounding work you and your teams are doing to support our children, their families and our workforce through this pandemic. We know you are all working a huge number of hours throughout the week, and at weekends, and have done so for many months.

Christmas this year will be very different for us all, I am sure, However I do believe we now have a little light at the end of the tunnel. Please stay safe and we look forward to brighter times in 2021.

Yours sincerely



**Mr G Cannon**  
**Headteacher**