



HAILSHAM COMMUNITY COLLEGE ACADEMY TRUST

'Be the very best you can be'

11 September 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

I am writing a letter this week to provide you with my early reflections on the full return of students to the college.

It has been truly wonderful to see the students returning through our gates this week. They have been missed hugely by the staff. We all know that they are the heart and soul of our community college and they bring a vibrancy and warmth to the site now they are back with us.

Students have made a fantastic start, with excellent attendance and an impressive standard of uniform. All students, including those wearing their PE kits, have been immaculately dressed, wearing their uniform smartly and correctly.

The Senior Leadership Team and I have spent the last two days walking the playgrounds and popping in and out of lessons to ensure everything is going smoothly. It has been fantastic to welcome all our new Year 7 students who are clearly eager and excited to get started at the college. Whilst there are the natural questions about finding their way around, the students seem to have settled very quickly. However, we know that it can take time for some new students to find their feet and we would ask parents/carers to contact us on 01323 841468 or email hcc@hccat.net if they have any concerns about how their child is settling in.

At the other end of the spectrum I have enjoyed the opportunity to talk to the Year 11s, many of whom clearly have some concerns and anxieties linked to next summer's GCSE exams. They all understand the importance of taking their learning extremely seriously from the very first day back to ensure that we can provide them with the utmost support over the coming weeks and months.

Most importantly, I can report with pride that students in all year groups have come back showing a good level of maturity and understanding of the current situation in relation to Covid-19 and in most cases, clearly appreciate the need for the 'control measures' we have put in place. We have talked to them at length about hand sanitising, social distancing, the one way system and, whilst there is still work to be done in ensuring that they are all entirely consistent in meeting our expectations, students have made a very good start and I have confidence that they will support us in helping to keep our community safe and well.

I would like to take this opportunity to offer some clarification around the use of face coverings.

- The current government guidance states that "face coverings will not be necessary in the classroom even where social distancing is not possible. Face coverings would have a negative impact on teaching and their use in the classroom should be avoided". However, we know that some parents/carers have concerns about this and we would ask that if you wish your son or daughter to wear a face covering in their lessons that you contact their House Leader to discuss it further.

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- We recommend the use of face coverings in communal areas such as corridors and playgrounds where social distancing is not always possible. This is not compulsory but students may wear one if they wish to do so. We ask that any face coverings are plain with no patterns or logos.
- All students **must** bring a face covering to college with them each day, even if they choose not to wear one in communal areas. In the event of a fire drill where the whole college assembles on the all-weather pitch, they will all be required to wear them.

I would also like to highlight the coloured lanyards which all students are now expected to wear at all times. These are crucial in supporting staff in quickly identifying year groups (bubbles) and any individuals who are not where they should be.

Finally, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to you for your support during the current situation. Staff and I have really appreciated all your messages of support and positive feedback around the approach we are currently taking. However, as always, if you have any concerns or queries please do contact the college at hcc@hccat.net

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Matthews', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Phil Matthews
Executive Principal