**WORKINGTON ACADEMY**

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**Mr D Bird**
Headteacher
*"Be The Best You Can Be"*

15th July 2021

Dear Parents/Carer

As the end of term approaches, it is vital to reflect upon the year that we have just experienced. We began in September nervously, with most students having not been in school since March 2020. New safety precautions were everywhere, and school felt very different. The students and staff rose to this challenge admirably. Throughout the Autumn term there were ominous signs that Coronavirus was once again on the rise. Sure enough, over Christmas came the announcement that schools were again to close.

We switched to online learning, this time with improved technology, almost 200 laptops lent to families, online registration every morning and online assemblies. Once again, our school community rose to the challenge.

We reopened in March with a bang, all students back on the first day the Government guidance allowed. There then followed a period of time when cases of coronavirus were low both locally and nationally, and we began to plan for a summer term when we could get back to normal.

Alas, as we are all aware, things have changed. It has been a difficult last half term, with Coronavirus reappearing in schools across the country and causing massive disruption. Sadly, we had to cancel or postpone some of the fabulous things we had planned, and a number of students had to self-isolate in line with current guidance. As ever, our school community has been amazing, and I would like to thank you personally for your patience, resilience and adaptability.

We look forward to the future with hope, but it is important to note that Coronavirus did not put a stop to everything……

Throughout the Summer Term our Year 7 students have continued to build upon the impressive start made to their secondary school career throughout the remainder of the year, albeit in difficult and unusual circumstances.

Miss Tweddle, our Year 7 Team and all of our teachers have been incredibly impressed by the outstanding effort that these students have shown across all curriculum areas, in their recent Year 7 exams and through filling our classrooms with enthusiasm, diligence and team work. The Year 7 students have continued to lead the way in Accelerated Reader and MYON throughout this term, with students achieving the highest word counts and passing the most quizzes across the academy.

Year 7 in-school attendance, as well as attendance at home-learning club, additional music lessons and extra-curricular clubs including; sport, Drama and 'Mrs Fitz' Games club has been fantastic, which we expect to continue into Year 8. As part of our Tutor programme, Year 7 students have enjoyed taking part in activities linked to Mental Health Awareness, Careers and the environment, as well as turning their focus to welcoming our soon to be new Year 7 students to the academy.

Year 8 and 9 have spent a great deal of time this year focusing on the importance of well-being and supporting each other. As a team, we are so very proud to have introduced a vast range of activities and initiatives focused around kindness and improving mental wellbeing. Both year groups have had the pleasure of being able to appoint kindness ambassadors in recognition of some of our students who encompass the idea of supporting each other in a range of ways. This is something which we are very much looking forward to continuing in the future.

In addition to this, form-time activities have involved sending postcards to each other, developing self-awareness and also starting the 'Ready to Work' program which aims to develop the skills and qualities needed to embark on a new journey into key stage four and beyond.

Years 8 and 9 have had the pleasure of making contacts with a range of outside agencies, who have provided support and guidance to our students. They have participated in 'Women in Industry' seminars, workshops with GEN2 and we are delighted to announce that Year 8 have also embarked on a program with The Centre of Leadership Performance in which they will participate in 'Leading for Change'. This will continue into the next academic year and provides our students with access to a range of leading professionals to develop their social and academic skills.

Year 9 have now all chosen their new pathways for GCSEs and are ready to begin their journey in Key Stage 4. They have had the opportunity to attend virtual and live lessons and many have expressed how easy and informative they found their options experience.

Outside of school, many of the students in Years 8 and 9 have shown success in their chosen sports and hobbies and many have excelled different areas. Jay in Year 9 has continued to win numerous golf competitions and is competing and winning at adult level. Luke, also in Year 9, has continued his winning streak in his banger car racing, scooping first place recently in a competition in Bradford and many of the students are happy to be back playing grassroots football. Afterschool athletics has also proven to be an extremely popular club with many of the Year 8 and 9's signing up to attend.

The radio club continue to flourish. This year they didn't let lockdown stop them. They continued to meet weekly on Teams, and even bagged themselves a huge celebrity interview with Nick Grimshaw. Most recently, Workington Academy Radio have been planning for live broadcasts, which they produce and air live every Friday afternoon. It really is a fantastic listen!

Both year groups continued to demonstrate their creativity recently. Twelve students were chosen to be published in the latest Young Writers competition, in which they produced their own "Unsolved" mini sagas. This was an incredible achievement by all of our winners.

During our summer performance, we were blown away by more talent on display! The singers from all year groups impressed everyone with their moving and faultless performances.

It has been great to see so many of our Key Stage 3 students attending our additional enrichment activities and extra-curricular clubs throughout this term, which have included Music and instrumental lessons, Drama club and After School Sports Clubs.

Our Year 7 students have taken part in a series of Inter-Form Sporting Events after school and also took part in their first ever Workington Academy Sports Day this week, which was a fantastic event and atmosphere. Students enjoyed competing individually and as a Form Group throughout a series of Athletics Events – pushing themselves to be the best that they can be.

Our Year 7 and 8 students also featured in our fantastic CET 'One Big Dance' Event, which was broadcast across all Cumbria Education Trust schools this week – well done to all involved.

Year 10 students successfully completed their trial exams this term and showed great resilience when completing these. A high number of our students have really excelled and a number of those to a very high standard especially in Core subjects and Humanities. Other subjects have also seen the Year 10 students excel which has been achieved through hard work and commitment.

Students have started to plan towards their studies in Year 11 and have been developing their studying techniques and revision strategies during form time. Students now know the importance of revision especially those that have seen their efforts rewarded through their results. With this in mind students could commit some of their holiday time to any home learning set and perhaps use the revision cards provided to ensure they have a successful start to Year 11.

Students responded well to 'Be the best you can be week' with many involved in a range of challenges set by the Year Group Team designed to support the students as they transition into Year 11. Students looked at planning revision and reviewing topics of work that they find difficult so that they can improve in key areas.

This half term saw WCSF welcome our new Year 12 students for their transition programme. It was great to meet all of them and we were very impressed with their enthusiasm and hard work! Students joined us across both campuses for a week of taught lessons before embarking on a week of work experience and then a week of distance learning. Well done to all of the students, we cannot wait to see you all in September!

Our current Year 12 students have also been working hard, completing their end of year exams and beginning to consider their post-18 options. All students have used Unifrog to explore apprenticeship and university options and have complete a personal statement workshop to consider how they can convey that they real are the best they can be to any potential university, apprenticeship provider or employer.

We are also really proud of our alumni, so many of our prior students have shown unparalleled resilience and graduated from university this year, including our first sixth form head boy, Jack Earl who achieved a first-class master's degree in biomedical science and is now going to study medicine in York.

We have also been impressed by the engagement and entries into our range of CET events and competitions, which has seen a vast number of our students and families continue to take part in our 'CET Cumbrian Landscapes Photography' competition.

Well done to all staff and students who have entered our photography competition to date and please continue to enter this throughout the Summer Holiday period for both July and August's Competitions. For your chance to win, please continue to submit your photo entries each month to photo@cumbriaeducationtrust.org

Well done to all students who took part in the CET My Money Week Competition in June, which was ran in conjunction with Landmark Street Art to design a piece of Cumbrian Themed Street Art. Well done to Hatice Irmak Gulcihan in Year 10, who was our Workington Academy winner for this competition.

Throughout the penultimate week of term 5-9 July, all students engaged in CET's first ever 'Be the Best You Can Be Week', which saw our students engage in a series of opportunities to push, challenge and express themselves in as many different ways as possible – encompassing our core values of Respect, Responsibility and Resilience, showcasing, developing and celebrating skills and talents. Across Workington Academy we have hosted a wide range of events, competitions, challenges and celebrations all focused around 'Being the Best You Can Be', including all students taking part in our annual CET mile event.

Well done to Ellie Ritchie and Jack Burns in Year 10 who were the overall school winners of our Workington Academy CET Mile event, completing the mile in 7.39 minutes and 6.10 minutes respectively.

As we move towards the start of a new Academic year and ready to welcome our new Year 7 students to Workington Academy, who will be starting with us in September 2021, the Year 7 Team have also enjoyed getting to know the new Year 7 students and families throughout the course of this term, through our Virtual Transition programme. We look forward to welcoming the majority of our new Year 7 students to Summer School over the next two weeks and welcoming everyone into our Workington Academy family in September. For further Year 6-7 Transition information for current Year 5 or Year 6 students, please go to our dedicated Team Year 7 Transition website - https://vle.workingtonacademy.org/welcome-to-team-year-7

As part of our Academy Rewards programme, we have been delighted to issue a wide number of rewards to both individual students and Form Groups across all year groups and department areas over the last term whilst students have been working both at home and at school. Our rewards programme focuses on praising effort, academic progress, classwork and home-learning, attendance and the displaying of our core values; our 3R's as well as other occasions where our students are simply being 'the best they can be'. These rewards come in the form of certificates, letters, praise postcards and stickers amongst others. Please continue to check our Academy Social Media pages for special recognition of Year Group and Departmental awards issued throughout each term.

We acknowledge that the COVID-19 pandemic continues to affect many of us in different ways and for some families we understand that school holidays can present many challenges. Free School Meal Vouchers have been allocated to all qualifying students via the WONDE voucher scheme, as they have been in previous school holidays and food bank vouchers have also been distributed to all families who requested these. If you are in need of any additional help and support, including access to food during the Half Term period, please refer to the following website, which details an array of advice and support information; https://cumbria.gov.uk/welfare/ Furthermore, information in specific relation to local foodbanks can be found here; https://www.thefoodbank.org.uk/

You will be aware that the Government have announced an additional Bank Holiday next year. Schools are asked to fit this additional holiday into their calendar. In line with almost all Cumbrian schools, this day will be 17th December, meaning that the Autumn Term will end on 16th December.

The 2nd and 3rd of September are INSET days. Currently the Government guidance states that schools are to undertake a programme of LFD testing in school at the beginning of the Autumn term. To allow this to happen, the following Year Groups will begin on the following days:

**Monday 6th September: Years 7, 11, 12 and 13 (8.35am)**
**Tuesday 7th September: All year groups. (8.35am)**

Please look out for updates about testing, and other important information, throughout the summer, as we have become accustomed to arrangements having to change due to Coronavirus.

I would finally like to wish you all a happy, safe and restful summer.

Kind regards.



Mr D Bird
Headteacher