



# SEAHAM HIGH SCHOOL

*Engaging minds, broadening horizons*

Seaham High School  
Station Road  
Seaham  
Co. Durham  
SR7 0BH

01915161600

Head Teacher: Mr G.W Lumsdon

Deputy Head: Mrs A Carr  
Deputy Head: Mr J.E Henderson

21<sup>st</sup> October 2019

Dear Parent/Carer,

I am writing to you to inform you that the DFE has approved our application to convert to become an Academy and join the Eden Learning Trust. We do not yet have a date to convert but anticipate it will be in the Spring term following the statutory TUPE process. I am delighted with this news as I believe it will be of great benefit to the students and staff at the school both now and in the future. I am pleased that our Progress 8 figure has improved to -0.39, which is a significant improvement on last year's figure. However, I am conscious there is still improvement to be made and predictions for current Year 11 would indicate that next August's results should be better again. What should reassure you is that staff predictions this year proved to be very accurate.

As usual we will not be allowing students to bring bikes or scooters during the winter months due to darker mornings therefore students are not allowed to bring them after half term. The new school day and lunch time arrangements have ran smoothly and I am confident that both have been the right decision. Lunch time queues are much shorter and the students are benefitting from increased Personal Development time in the morning. In addition to this I am delighted with both student and parental response to our decision to ban mobile phones in school. This policy has been accepted by students without complaint and to see students talking more in their social times rather than looking at screens is particularly pleasing. I ask you to remember that we took this decision primarily to protect students. Should you need to get a message to your child then please contact the main reception but I would ask you to do so only if it is a message that cannot wait until 3:00pm when students can access their phones on the way home.

I also need to remind parents and carers of the change to our detention system. The vast majority of detentions are now held after school. If students are late to school or receive a restoration time during the school day they will automatically be placed on a 30 minute afterschool detention on the same day. If students are relocated during the school day they will be placed on a 60 minute afterschool detention on the same day. All students are expected to be inside the school building by 8:45am- we have to have a cut-off point for this. The school will inform parents/carers by text message during the school day, so it is imperative the school has the correct mobile phone details for this to happen. We greatly appreciate the parental support we have received in regards to these detentions, which has been almost without



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exception excellent. This is having a marked impact on improvement in behaviour for learning in lessons and reducing the number of students late in the morning.

It is with regret that I have been forced to place a County Durham notice in reception warning visitors and parents that verbal abuse of our staff will not be tolerated. It is a sad reflection of modern society that this is now needed- the only heartening aspect to it, is to know that this is not just a problem at Seaham High School but across the County and country as a whole. I must make clear that I have a duty of care to protect staff from verbal and physical abuse. There have been three incidents since I have taken over as Headteacher where I have had to take drastic action and ban adults from the site.

Each incident of verbal abuse has to be recorded and logged with the Local Authority and quite frankly it is simply not acceptable. Staff have to make decisions, particularly regarding sanctions, which sometimes parents or carers may not agree with. In such instances we have to either agree to disagree or **if you think the decision is unfair then you have a right to follow our complaints procedure, which is on the school website or can be accessed directly from the school.** What can never be acceptable is to either ring or attend school and think you can shout, swear or otherwise intimidate our staff as all of **our staff have a right to work in an environment free from verbal abuse or harassment.** I would emphasize that this is not a regular occurrence and applicable only to a very small minority of parents, however it would be remiss of me not to make clear our expectations.

It is vital to keep family contacts, emails and mobile numbers up to date. From a Safeguarding point of view parents need to be aware that we cannot release your child or speak to any adult who is not a named family contact on our system. This includes adult siblings or family relatives.

Changes to our policy on Enrichment week residentials following parental feedback last year have gone extremely well. Letters confirming applications should be publicised this week. Please bear in mind that almost every visit was oversubscribed in some instances by as many as 60 students therefore a high number of students are going to be disappointed.

Can I thank you for your support so far this academic year and wish you a restful half term?

Yours sincerely  
Mr G.W. Lumsdon  
Head Teacher