

Furness Academy
Park Drive
Barrow in Furness
Cumbria
LA13 9BB

Telephone Number:
01229 484270
info@furnessacademy.co.uk
www.furnessacademy.co.uk



12 February 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

As this first period of home schooling draws to a close, we hope that you and your families have been coping well with the new routines and style of learning. The regular reports that we receive from your son/daughter's teachers have reported that their ability to adapt, to rise to the challenge and 'can do' attitude, are all shining through. Thank you, for all of your support and positive suggestions on how we can improve things further and, as time has gone by, we hope that you have all found things running much more smoothly and effectively.

As I am sure you can understand, we would love to be able to provide some clarity at this stage about our plans for reopening to all students, but we will have to wait until the announcement by the government, due on 22 February, to be able to be firmer on our plans. Please be assured that we have been considering a number of different scenarios to ensure that, whatever the decision is, we remain poised to be able to welcome students back as quickly as possible.

We are also still waiting for the final decisions about what is going to happen in the absence of this year's summer examination series and how our Year 11 students will be awarded their grades for their GCSE courses. In the absence of this information, my advice remains the same for all of our students and that is to maintain your engagement with your studies. Your teachers will always do their very best to ensure that you are continually moving forwards and learning. We know it is not the same as being at school and there are some drawbacks to remote learning, but making gradual steps forward is so much better than just standing still. Look how far we have already come since the first period of national lockdown 11 months ago.

Today also marks the final day of one our longest serving staff members, John Clements, as he retires from the Design & Technology department. There is something very special about working in schools and education that lures and draws you in, that captures the spirit and imagination and makes you stay and after 33 years' service I think it's fair to say, John succumbed to it.

When John joined Parkview School in 1987, the educational landscape was very different to today. Margaret Thatcher was in Number 10 and Kenneth Baker was the Secretary of State for Education. There was no National Curriculum and no Ofsted and Bon Jovi were at number one with 'Living on a Prayer'! It was a time of big hair and the battery for a mobile phone was the size of a suitcase. Despite all the changes that he has seen, some good and some not so good, one of the constants that remained throughout has been John's commitment to the teachers he supported within the Technology department.

John will be a real loss. He is one of our many unsung heroes: a modest and unassuming person who just gets on doing a fine job, building excellent relationships with students and colleagues and thoroughly conscientious at all times; a consummate professional.

I often feel that one of the ways Furness Academy has the edge is in the quality and dedication of its support staff who really bring special qualities. John has been a classic example of this for 33 years and we wish him and his wife, Margaret, a long and happy retirement.

Thank you all, again, for your sustained support this half term. It is greatly appreciated by us and we hope that you have a restful half term break.

Yours faithfully

Simon Laheney
Headteacher & Chief Executive Officer



Furness Education Trust
Company No. 06895426
Registered Address: Park Drive, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria LA13 9BB

