

## Ofsted and remote learning update

Dear parent/carer,

First of all, I'd like to apologise for the amount of letters coming out but I want to make sure that you are kept up to date with developments in school.

In February 2019 the school was inspected by Ofsted, which resulted in an inadequate judgement. Whilst this was hard to take at the time, it was a fair judgement of where the school was. The previous two years results had not been good enough, we had a number of staffing issues along with a significant number of students who hadn't started at Tanfield (a third of one year group) causing behaviour issues. We are a completely different school now. Those staff and students are no longer at Tanfield School. In 2019 our progress 8 score was the 6th most improved of all schools in County Durham. We were disappointed that our students didn't get to sit their exams in the summer because we believe that we would have been the most improved this year.

I am extremely proud of TeamTanfield and what we have achieved over the last few months. Therefore, I asked Ofsted to visit the school, when they were looking for schools to pilot their new Autumn term visits. Ofsted visited the school last Tuesday. I was hoping that we would get some judgments to show how far we have come. However, when they arrived they said that this wasn't the purpose of the visit. They were only checking how students have returned to school. I have attached the official letter that we got from them. As you can see, it gives no information. They did, however, give some factual comments in our feedback meeting which are listed below:

- The school had a staggered start with all students returning to full time education from the 4th September.
- Attendance levels are similar to this time last year and currently above those in March 2020 before lockdown. Leaders are using a range of approaches including video to return students with confidence.
- Students are studying a full curriculum with some adaptations to PE, Music, DT and Art due to the nature of the building.
- A range of assessment is being used to identify gaps and mini-whiteboards have been bought for all students to aid feedback.
- KS3 students are following a full curriculum with additional time given to address gaps in learning.
- KS4 students are all following their chosen curriculum choices.
- Remote learning is in place for all students and across a wide range of subjects. Leaders are continuing to develop this approach for any future lockdowns.

We know that we are a rapidly improving school and that is down to the effective partnerships that we have with you. We want to thank you again for the continued support. Together we will continue our improvements, as we strive to be the best that we can be.

The second reason for writing this letter is to give an update on our remote learning approach for year 7 and 8 students. In my last letter I explained that students in year 7 and 8 would go to their year group classroom. However, we are going to change to advisory group classrooms. This is because Google classroom only allows 20 staff to be part of the classroom. This means that not all year 7 and 8 teachers can be in the classroom. The problem with this is that students can't then receive individual feedback from their teacher. We believe that this is crucial for students when they have worked so hard to do the work. By switching to advisory groups, students will receive feedback after completing work. This change will take place this week. Therefore, students will need to look for the work in their advisory classroom. For example, students in 7SLI would look in the 7SLI Google classroom for their work. Students in year 7 and 8 will need to follow these steps:

- Go to the Google classroom named after your advisory
- Go to the classwork folder in that Google classroom
- Students should follow their usual timetable, therefore, open the relevant subject folder where the learning resources are located
- Open the ebooklet and find out where they are up to (this is the same as the booklet being used in school to ensure that students are doing the same work as other students)
- Open the presentation list, this is in the same folder, and locate the presentation to go with the lesson that they will be working through
- Watch the video for the lesson (sometimes this is in the ebooklet)
- Read through the lesson text and instructions
- Complete the tasks
- The teacher will give feedback on the work

As always, if there is anything you think we can do better please let us know using the [help@tanfieldschool.co.uk](mailto:help@tanfieldschool.co.uk) email address.

Take care,

Mr S Clough  
Head Teacher



TANFIELD SCHOOL  
HEADTEACHER Steven Clough BSc (Hons) NPQH

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16 September 2020

Mr Steven Clough

Headteacher

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Dear Mr Clough

### **Re: Pilot visit at Tanfield School**

I am writing to express my gratitude for your school's recent participation in a pilot interim visit.

I sincerely appreciate the time you and your staff gave on the day. The conversations and your feedback provided useful information which will help us to shape the visits as the term goes on.

Yours sincerely

Michael Reeves

**Her Majesty's Inspector**

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