



SUMMERHILL SCHOOL

20 July 2020

Dear Parent/Carers,

End of Summer Term 2020

In an ordinary world, today would have marked the end of a busy, creative and vibrant summer term. We would have had many celebrations and sent our students on their way to an exciting summer holiday. This has not been the case and it will be the end of what has been one of the most tumultuous and challenging years I have known in my 22 years of teaching. I am both incredibly proud and extremely grateful for how everyone has worked together during the last few months. With the exception of three bank holidays, Summerhill has been open everyday since 23 March. From the many lovely messages of support, thanks and gifts I know how much the work of my staff, supporting our many Key Workers, has been appreciated by you.

The enforced closure as a result of the Coronavirus outbreak meant that many planned events had to be cancelled. As a result, we have missed out on celebrating the success of our students in many different ways. The swift cancellation of the Year 11 exams felt so abrupt and we know the students had been working so hard and they would have performed brilliantly this year. Students also unfortunately missed out on exciting trips and visits and sadly Year 10 couldn't complete their work experience. Whilst we appreciate we can't make up for the things that have been lost, it is our intention to hold a rearranged Year 11 Prom in November 2020 and more information will follow on this in September.

As one academic year ends, we inevitably turn our attention to the new term in September. We know that this will feel very different but if we work together, we will make the best out of the situation we find ourselves in. We have missed the students and really look forward to welcoming them back at the start of the new academic year. We will continue to make plans for this over the summer and students will receive updated information in late August. Please refer to my letter last week with regard to the detail of this.

I have only been at Summerhill for 8 months (although it feels much longer) and I am so proud of our school community. The staff at Summerhill are truly brilliant professionals and it is a pleasure to work with them. I am so grateful for their work over the period since lockdown and I know, through all the lovely emails and comments we have received, that many parents feel the same. I also want to thank and pay tribute to you, our parents and carers, who have provided so much support to our young people. There is so much positivity about our school now and the strength of that partnership when we all work together is so important. Finally, I'd like to pay tribute to our amazing students. They are simply a joy and pleasure to work with and we are blessed to have them in our school community. Their dedication and resilience over the past few months has been truly commendable.

As we head to the end of term, we have some important staffing updates:

Goodbyes

Madame Flo Howarth (MFL)

This year we are bidding a very fond farewell to Madame Flo Howarth who has been very much at the heart of the MFL department and indeed the school for 21 years. There are very few students who leave Summerhill without having been taught by Madame Howarth, be it in French and Spanish lessons at Summerhill or at Primary. Her passion for teaching, learning and young people is always the centrepiece of what she does in her roles as teacher, form tutor, colleague and friend. While we will miss her dearly, we wish her all the very best enjoying more time with her husband Trevor (who she met here and married 14 years ago), children and grandchildren and of course La France. *Merci beaucoup chère Madame Howarth, tu vas tellement nous manquer. Bonne retraite at gros bisous.* Flo has been an amazing member of staff and will be missed by everyone.

Steven Bibby (Music)

Steven has played a massive part at Summerhill over the past three years. His musical expertise has developed an amazing Steel Band renowned locally and nationally. In addition, he has been instrumental (excuse the pun) in developing school

productions, celebrations and community events. The newly developed 'Friends of Summerhill' parents' group was the brainchild of Steven and has had such a positive impact in the local community along with all of his work in our feeder primary schools. In addition, Steven has served as a Staff Governor and contributed a significant amount to the strategic overview of the school. Steven moves 'home' up north to take up a promoted post much closer to his family and friends in West Yorkshire. We wish him every success for the future and thank him for all the brilliant things he has done at Summerhill.

Dave Freeman (Science)

Dave is one of our longest serving members of staff, having been at Summerhill for over 30 years. He has made a tremendous difference to the lives of hundreds of students and to the world of physics in the Science team. Although Dave is officially retiring this year, he isn't leaving us, returning three days a week in September. It was important that we recognised this milestone in his career now but we really look forward to him returning in the new academic year.

Jess Evans (English)

Jess has been with us covering Charlotte Bradley's maternity cover. She is leaving us to begin her PGCE course at University. Jess has been a popular member of the English team and we wish her all the best for her future teaching career.

Maternity Leave

We send our love and best wishes to Kerri Fradley and Eleri Fisher who are soon to be new moms. We welcome back Jayne Roper (Plant) who has just returned from maternity leave.

New Starters

As we continue to look to the future, we have made additional appointments to strengthen our staff team. We welcome the following members of staff, who will join Summerhill in September 2020:

- Monique Grant-Patel (Teacher of Art)
- Dee Hill (HLTA)
- Sarbjit Khela (Teacher of Science)
- Tamzin Lockett (TA)
- Katy Matthews (TA)
- Mags McGrath (Teacher of English)
- Tracey O'Dea (0.4 Teacher of Art)
- Lee Sabin (Teacher of Music)
- Kirsty Stanley (Nurture Teacher)
- Mandy Stanley (Behaviour Intervention HLTA)
- Natalie Taylor (Teacher of MFL)
- Kelly Wollerton (TA)

I would like to remind parents and carers that the term restarts on Tuesday 1 September 2020 and this will be a training day for all staff, closed to all students. We will reopen to Year 7 students on Wednesday 2 September 2020 and to all other students on Thursday 3 September 2020. Please refer to the letter sent last week and to the further information that will be sent out in late August.

I would like to wish all of our school community a restful and enjoyable summer, and look forward to seeing you all again in September. Please stay safe and look after each other.

Yours sincerely

Martyn Palfreyman
Headteacher