



# The Ripley Academy and Sixth Form

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1 May 2020

Dear students

I have had several video meetings with your teachers this week and I wanted to pass on my congratulations to the vast majority of you who are doing so well under the current circumstances. Your teachers report that the quality of the work that you are doing is of a good standard and that they are finding your engagement with your remote learning motivating for them. Personally, I find my day to day routine difficult to maintain sometimes which makes me even more in awe of what you are all managing to achieve by continuing your education online.

I have been reflecting this week and I wonder if we are now entering the most difficult phase of 'lockdown' so far? I think that this is because we have come so far and achieved so much but perhaps we are all beginning to digest that we cannot begin to live 'normally' yet and that there is a long road that still lies ahead. I know that you will all continue to dig deep and to follow the instructions to stay at home, protect the NHS and save lives.

There has been quite a bit of speculation about when schools may start to have pupils back. As you can probably imagine, I cannot wait for that moment but we cannot compromise anyone's safety in our yearning to return to some kind of normality. I am sure that schools will get some planning time once a possible 'return date' has been announced and I will write to you to let you know what the plans are when I have clear guidance. Yesterday, the Secretary of State for Education, Gavin Williamson MP, hinted at a 'phased return' to schools. By this he means that when the time is right, it may be that not everyone will return to school at the same time but that this may be staggered amongst groups of students.

So today, my overarching message is that we need to all dig deep and to continue doing what we are currently doing. Things will 'normalise' but maybe not for a little while yet. This is why it is so important for you to continue to have a good daily routine, to keep up with your work and to keep in regular contact with each other and your teachers. Remember that you can contact us via email if you need a phone call home or any other kind of support (studenthelp@ripleyacademy.org or enquiries@ripleyacademy.org). I have also had very good feedback from this online resource: <https://www.thenational.academy/> - do have a look at what it might be able to offer you if you haven't tried it yet, especially Year 10 GCSE students.

**The Ripley Academy, Peasehill, Ripley, Derbyshire, DE5 3JQ.**

In news from the Walton household, I tried my hand at cooking the family meal one night this week – something that Mr Walton usually does. I hadn't realised how tricky it was to get three pizzas and a salad on the table at the same time. I found it very stressful and had to have a lie down afterwards with a cold compress on my forehead. Mrs Bishop in Food Technology would not have been very impressed with me at all!

I wish you and your families the very best of health.

Keep going and stay in close contact.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mrs Walton". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first letter 'M' being particularly large and stylized.

Mrs Walton

Executive Headteacher / Masterchef 2020