



Nothing says “we’re excited to be back” than an energetic jump by our Year 7s!

BACK TO THE FUTURE AT ST BEES SCHOOL

Now that we are able to be back in the classroom, Mr Sinnett has kindly summarised how the students and staff at St Bees have settled back into school life after three months of online teaching.

So it’s back to school life after such a long break, right? Let’s see how things are going... how are the students (and the staff) feeling? What is it like to be back? What does it mean for the future?

The past few months have meant a steep learning curve for all as a normal school environment was exchanged for a home school environment. The lonely vigil behind the computer screen with limited social interaction week after week.

Getting to grips with the intricacies of a Microsoft Teams virtual platform with its camera and microphone, its break-out rooms and the eagle-eye of the teacher who sees all. Sending classwork and homework via email. The need for rapid and successful adaptation to a completely new framework for learning.

Now that all this has become second nature, everything is once more up in the air. Back to school! Back to the old rhythms we thought we had forgotten. So how are students and staff reacting?

Students were understandably nervous at first. Excited, but nervous. After a short period of adaptation to the old routines (tempered with tight COVID regulations), the sense of relief was tangible.

Yes, earlier starts were resuming, and staff needed to work on coaxing the students out of the cosy home-school life they had become used to and back to real life, but the joy of learning was clear to see.

The Science department was fired up with conducting all the lab-based experiments to make up for the lack of practical, hands-on experience during lockdown. Open-plan, enquiry-based learning with its quick-fire questioning could resume in a dynamic classroom environment.

What about our international students, still back at home, compromised by travel and quarantine regulations? They are still linked through online learning, but we know for a fact that they too are “champing at the bit” to return to school at St Bees.

By the end of the first week, it was as if lockdown had never occurred. The new normal has put down its roots. Importantly, do our students actually enjoy being back at school? The answer is a resounding ‘yes’. It is as if the intrinsic value of school life – tarnished through years of routine – has somehow been burnished by lockdown, and now shines bright in the early springtime sunshine.

Roger Sinnett - Headmaster