



Monday 15th June 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope my letter finds you and your family and friends well.

I wanted to write to you to let you know that the school has now moved to a wider reopening phase so that there is face to face support, rather like an academic review, for invited Year 10 students and for Year 12 students. We recognise this is a very small step forward. Please be assured that we wish only to have all of our students back in school, with all of our staff, as quickly as possible.

In order to meet the rigorous demands of the school's Risk Assessment, we have opened a specific area of the school which is quite separate from the area we are using for the supervision of Key Workers' children. We are able to use up to six classrooms in this phase. Three on the Ground floor of the Main Building have been prepared for Y10 students and three classrooms above have been prepared for Y12 students.

Government has specified numbers of Y10 and 12 students that they hope to be in school for the coming weeks before the end of term. The Government has also stated that school provision will vary according to the circumstances and decisions of each school. That is why our provision seems so pared down in comparison to some schools.

Upstairs in the main building, to comply with social distancing expectations, each classroom can accommodate six students; the classrooms downstairs, which vary in size, can accommodate five, six and seven students each respectfully. This very small number compared to what is being discussed in various media is due to the fact that our school was largely built approximately one hundred years ago. Classrooms are much smaller than those built more recently.

Staff are working in three pools to minimise contact with groups of students. Each pool will provide staff for the supervision of Key Worker children and for face to face support of students in Y10 and Y12. The pools will also provide administrative and support staff for both types of provision. Each week within the pool providing on-site staff, there will be unused staff. These will work with the other two pools to provide distance learning to all students.

Y10 students will come in to school for five, two hour sessions during the course of one week, before the end of term. The following week, another group of Y10 students will work in a different prepared classroom with staff from a different pool. Staff from the pool that worked in the first week will remain working from home for the next two weeks at least, as a risk control measure and so on.

Y10 invited students are coming in to school to review work set with respect to distance learning and to receive further support to access all of their Google classrooms. Their sessions will be with teachers, not necessarily their usual classroom teacher and may not cover all of the subjects they study.

Y12 students will attend school for up to six, two hour sessions before the end of term. Each two hour session will be with a teacher from one of their A Level courses.

I apologise if the information here seems complicated but it does reflect the complexity of planning anticipated provision, within the constraints of our site and the rigour of the Risk Assessment; maintaining strict social distancing rules; at the same time ensuring confidence that students and staff can be together in school with risks mitigated.

I am aware that families of students in Year 10 will be disappointed that their daughter has not been invited in to school. I hope you will understand that the very small number we can safely accommodate means we had to base our provision on set criteria that identified greatest need for support at this time.

Our distance learning provision is comprehensive. Google classrooms were already set up and in use across the year groups, some for up to two years before school closure in March. For this reason we were able to swiftly move all of our provision onto the platform. Most schools nationally had no learning platform to rely on and where it has been since acquired, there has been little opportunity to train staff. In such circumstances video lessons seem a quick fix. They are a limited medium that is not accessible to all. Certainly safeguarding agencies that advise schools continue to tell us that unsupervised video contact between an adult and children is not best practice. Should technology advance and safeguarding guidance change, the school will move quickly to adapt and extend its provision appropriately.

Please remind your daughter that it is important for her to maintain contact with school even where there may be some lack of motivation to complete work set. Please encourage your daughter to seek support from school staff using the Google classroom *Stream* facility, or *Private Mode* if she is less confident to query class work in an open discussion. Your daughter has been receiving a weekly Wellbeing Newsletter from her Head of Year since school closed in March. The Newsletter provides various pieces of information, activities and links to further supportive websites. Another way for your daughter to keep in touch is through contact with her Form Tutor and the rest of the Form via the Google Form classroom.

Before coming to an end I would like to thank you all for the support you are giving to your daughter's education, beyond what would usually be expected and at a time when no doubt every family has its own set of complex circumstances to manage.

All good wishes



Violet Walker
Headteacher