



An All-through Co-operative School
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Dear Families

I wanted to write to all parents to provide you with further details regarding the measures that the school is putting in place for the reopening to more students over time, as well as keeping the community safe. Following on from my letter sent last week, I would also like to thank all the parents of year 10 and year 12 students for responding so quickly to our survey on whether their child will be returning to school before September. We now have a good understanding of the numbers of children who will be returning and have made our plans based on these numbers.

I realise the announcements from the media are very confusing and can be the cause of anxiety. Let me reassure you that I will continue to keep you informed of our plans as we are given guidance for any 'next steps' we are permitted to take. We know that you will appreciate that the safety of everyone in the school community is paramount. We all want to get more pupils back into school, as soon as it is safe to do so. However, I do want to stress that my first priority has to be the health and well-being of all our children, families and our staff. In the document attached below, I have included some of the measures we have taken, details in implementing government guidance and the impact on opening the school to more students.

For the vast majority of our students, who will continue to learn remotely at home, our staff will continue to provide online learning and feedback through our Google Classroom and Go4Schools. We will continue to ensure that the learning allows the children to continue to develop their knowledge across all subjects and year groups. I recognise that this has been a difficult period for the students and our families. I really appreciate all the positive feedback that we have had from parents about the quality of the learning that we have been providing. We will strive to continue providing the highest quality remote learning that we can.

Hopefully you will have already seen our *praise bulletins* which demonstrate high quality work from our students. We will continue to keep in touch with families throughout the rest of the summer term. Some year groups have been participating in remote tutor sessions with their form groups and the parents of each year group will be informed when these sessions are planned. We will be sending out school reports on each student and will also continue to make telephone contact with you during this term.



Despite what you might hear in the media, teachers and staff are still very much here. We are working hard to ensure that our learning community continues to grow and your child continues to progress. Please get in touch with your child's tutor, DSD or the school if you have any concerns. We welcome and value your communication.

Stay safe and continue to implement social distancing according to the guidance.

Yours sincerely

Beth Kobel
Headteacher



Considerations and Government Guidance on Opening Schools to More Pupils

It's a very unsettling time for us all, but rest assured we have been relentless in our planning in order to receive more students from the allocated year groups of year 10 and 12. I thought it would be helpful to share some of the 'government guidance' you will be hearing about in the news and also what it means in practice. *Some of these things help to explain why it is physically impossible to bring back all students at any one time or to follow a 'normal' timetable.*

- **Limiting class sizes and movement** - At the moment, no 'bubble' classes can have more than 15 students and some 'bubble' classes would be limited to 8 students due to the size of the room and space needed for two meter social distancing. Previously our classes would normally have 28-30 students.
- **Staggering break and lunch times** - No more than one 'bubble' can be in a playground or canteen area at one time.
- **Staggering starts and dismissal** - We must limit any bubble arriving at any of the entries at one time. Students need to be allocated 'arrival slots' for individual start times. The same is needed for dismissal.
- **External handwashing facilities and portable handwashing facilities have been installed** (These were needed for increased hand washing capacity)
- **Increased cleaning implemented with appropriate use of PPE.**
- **Clear Social distancing markings** (eg staying two meters apart at all times, restricted access to buildings and rooms according to bubbles)
- **Avoid a 'normal' timetable** - Bubbles cannot move classroom and where possible, their teacher does not change. This causes a problem for specialist subject teaching.
- **Keep shielding and vulnerable students and staff safe by working from home where possible.**
- **Keep all pupils and staff with coronavirus symptoms at home.**

The last two bullet points also mean that we do not have all staff available to teach every class. Furthermore, our school pre-coronavirus era was at physical capacity for students (e.g. all classrooms were full almost every period in the day). There is only the physical space to accommodate approximately 38% of the student population on any one day. *Currently, the government guidance does not allow for other year groups to return to school.* Whilst very complex, I think it is important to remember why all these social distancing measures and restrictions are in place. This is so that we may begin to leave our homes, go back to work and still avoid spreading the virus.