

1st June 2020

Dear Families

I hope you are well and are managing to find ways to cope with the COVID lockdown together. Being at home here with my family, although we do appreciate the additional time we've had together, we're now very much ready to return to normality and reboot our lives again. I'm certain that will strike a chord with you all too.

The recent news that restrictions are beginning to be eased is hugely encouraging and now being able to meet as larger groups is something that I'm certainly looking forward to. The test and trace facility is now live and again that will help provide us with important information to get us back to normal more quickly now.

In the last Parent Bulletin, I shared with you my concern over the lack of clarity in the message for schools to begin returning some year groups from the 1st of June.

The Government have now confirmed that secondary schools will begin providing some face to face support for Year 10 learners from the 15th June. If you are a parent of a Year 10 student at the school you will be no doubt very keen to hear from us how we will manage this face-to-face support from the 15th June and I will ensure that details are shared with you as soon as possible to help you plan. I can tell you that the approach will be based around blending together our current and comparatively successful remote learning approach with, for some students, the opportunity to have some face-to-face time in subject-specific question and answer tutorial sessions led by subject specialists at the school. The sessions will have everyone's safety as the very highest priority and will be conducted in line with current lockdown regulations. A key point to note here is that no student will be brought into school unnecessarily and I will not insist any student attends given the safety implications involved here. As I say, I will contact you again with more details in the next few days.

For all other year groups, in order to ensure that we all remain safe and continue to adhere to lockdown restriction regulations we will continue you with our current remote learning approaches which are mostly based around Google Classroom until the government instructs otherwise. Incidentally, in response to student feedback, I have asked staff to ensure that there is now more online face-to-face engagement in balance with our existing Google Classroom approach. I'm hoping these will prove effective and popular with students moving forward.

As I've mentioned in the paragraph for Year 10 parents above, the schools remote learning strategy has been comparatively successful and students in Years 7,8 and 9 must continue to engage with their online learning tasks and activities to ensure they don't fall behind. As I said to you all previously, your role in ensuring that your child continues to do their best and fully engages online with their teachers is absolutely crucial until we return to normal.

For critical key worker children and for those children categorised as vulnerable, we remain on call to provide support for those families and my thanks go to the staff who volunteered support here. I am thankful that we've been sensible here as I've not been keen to put anybody at risk up to this point.

Finally, I remain proud of all the students and staff who've worked so hard to ensure our remote learning strategies have been as successful as we'd hoped. We have learned so much from recent experiences of working with platforms like Google Classroom, Century Tech and Google Meets video conferencing and I'm determined, along with other educational leaders, to capitalise on this new learning and create a brand new upgraded learning experience for everyone when we come through this.

This has been an unprecedented time in our history and one I hope we never have to endure again but we will return to normality at some point soon and staff, governors and myself are 100% committed to ensuring that we get everyone back on track as quickly as we can whilst ensuring everyone's well-being continues to remain our highest priority.

Best wishes to you all and please stay safe

Gary Nelson  
Headteacher