

Dear Parents/Carers,

Thank you for your on-going support, we fully appreciate how challenging these times are and the additional pressures remote learning places on you and your children. By us all working together we are doing the best we can for our children.

We are all looking forward to the time when we can all be back safely at school together and hopefully over the coming days and weeks the detail on this from the government will be clearer. As you are aware, the Government's plan is for all schools to begin planning to extend the existing provision that has been in place for children of key workers, and those who are vulnerable, to some face to face time in schools for year 10 students before the summer break. Monday 1 June was cited as the *very earliest* date that schools might be able to open and not the date by which schools would increase provision. As ever, the health, safety and well-being of our students and staff is our primary focus and our provision will not be increased until our thorough planning and risk assessments have been completed. School leaders are working closely with the DMAT board of trustees who make the final decision on when this date will be. These adhere to the current SAGE hierarchy of controls; this sets out how to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

- *Controlling the transmission of the disease*: minimising contact with children and adults who are unwell by ensuring that those who have coronavirus symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does, do not attend school.
- *Management and control through personal hygiene*: cleaning hands more often than usual - wash hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with running water and soap and dry them thoroughly or use alcohol hand rub or sanitiser ensuring that all parts of the hands are covered.
- *Ensuring good respiratory hygiene*: promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach.
- *Enhanced cleaning regimes*: cleaning frequently-touched surfaces often using standard products, such as detergents and bleach.
- *Minimising contact and mixing*: altering, as much as possible, the environment (such as classroom layout) and timetables (such as staggered break times).

What is clear to all is that the situation continues to change rapidly.

Current situation

- We continue to provide for the children of key workers and vulnerable children. This number is increasing as more parents are requiring additional provision as some workplaces have re-opened.
- The majority of students and staff are working remotely from home.

Next steps and provisional dates

- A lot of work is underway in planning for this increased provision. Safety is as ever the priority for our students and staff. We need to ensure that any on-site provision is of increased benefit as opposed to home learning and that we balance on-site provision with the learning for the rest of the school for students and staff.
- Week beginning 8 June: year 10s begin 1:1 meetings on site on a rota basis.
- Week beginning 15 June: year 10s begin some on-site lessons. These would be for part of the day on a rota system.

As it explains above, these are provisional dates.

Some of the factors which we are considering in our risk assessments and planning are outlined below. This list is not exhaustive.

- Which staff will be available to work with students on site based on careful adherence to guidelines for extremely vulnerable staff and social distancing?
- Is the workload of staff appropriate and manageable?
- With more staff in school, how do we maintain high quality remote learning for those students still learning from home?
- How can we ensure that social distancing is in place throughout the school sessions?
- When and why might staff need appropriate PPE and do we have access to this?
- How will our current cleaning regime need to be adjusted?
- What travel arrangements would need to be made?
- Will the government's testing regime support large volumes of students returning to school settings? Will tests be readily available for staff and students if required?
- What will the procedure be if we have a confirmed case of COVID-19 among the community who are attending school? Will all members of the community then have access to a test?
- How will we manage break times, access to toilets, starts and ends of the sessions, movement along corridors and other higher risk activities?
- What numbers can we accommodate on the school site whilst maintaining social distancing and minimising the risk of transmitting the virus?
- How will we group students, since the guidance states that they should be in groups of no more than 15 (and 10-12 in smaller classrooms)?
- What will the class provision involve?

What we are doing now

1. Completion of a **risk assessment** to cover all of the activities involved in a phased return.
2. Identification of the staff who are available to work on site with students (ie. those staff who are not in the vulnerable group and do not have dependents at home who could not be kept safe if the staff member came to work on site).
3. Surveying year 10 parents to see who would want provision followed by the identification of the students who would access the face to face sessions, and how they would be grouped
4. Drawing together of a timetable for the sessions based on the answers to 2) and 3).
5. Agreeing all of the protocols, routines and procedures which would need to be in place in order to keep people safe.
6. Sharing of the plan with staff, students, parents/carers and governors for their views in the week beginning 1 June 2020.
7. Adjusting the plan based on feedback from all groups.
8. Communicating the plan to staff, students and parents/carers so that everyone knows what is expected of them.

9. Implementing the first phase of the return.

Following the next statutory government review on 28 May, I will write to you in the week beginning 1st June to share our plans and seek your views. We will obviously make sure that staff, students and parents/carers have plenty of notice before any return to work in classrooms.

The government has issued a lot of guidance for schools and colleges but very little of it is 'directed'. They are asking schools to consider their local circumstances and plan any return based on these. Our aim, therefore, is to make sure that we consider all of the issues, and plan carefully, before we bring more students onto the site. The guidance for parents (from the Department for Education) can be found here:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/reopening-schools-and-other-educational-settings-from-1-june?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery

If you have any questions or comments at this stage, please do not hesitate to contact us. We hope you all keep safe and we look forward to continuing to work with you next half term.

Yours sincerely,

Ms S Marooney
Executive Headteacher/CEO DMAT