

10th May 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

I hope this finds you all safe and well, and that you managed to enjoy the brief spell of wonderful weather to accompany the VE Day celebrations.

This is another letter of uncertainty and controversy I'm afraid, but I hope it also provides some reassurance nevertheless.

Mr Johnson has just announced the government's plans for the "first, careful steps" to easing the lockdown, including if and how some children could return to school at some point in the near future.

He stated that a phased return to school would begin with pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6, if infection rates and other tests at the time allow it, with an earliest date of 1st June. He also said that there was an "ambition" that secondary students facing exams next year would get some time in school before the summer holidays, although an anticipated date was not implied.

It seems increasingly likely that, for the vast majority of students, we will not be returning to any form of 'normal' schooling before September and, having carried out a detailed risk assessment of social distancing implications, I have to agree that this is the only possible outcome to ensure everyone's safety. We have tentatively planned for a variety of scenarios and I am meeting with key colleagues on Tuesday to discuss the implications of this announcement. With strict social distancing in place, we currently have the capacity to accommodate the students anticipated, but this obviously is dependent on the staffing levels at the time and any future government guidance.

As and when further announcements are made, I will keep you updated with our plans. Until then, please treat any media (and especially social media!) speculation with caution.

In other news, teaching staff have been working extremely hard with the huge responsibility of awarding centre assessed grades for GCSE students. Whilst this is of course unprecedented, we have an exemplary track record of predicting accurate grades for our students, so I have utmost trust in the staff in this regard. Thank you to all students and parents for returning exercise books as requested, so that we can ensure that our evidence is as robust as possible.

Despite the circumstances, we have had the pleasure of seeing some amazing work from our students, both from home and in school. Please keep the pictures coming and follow us on Twitter to see our most recent examples.

Congratulations to the Lyons family and the Hartford family, who were both champions in our 'current' and 'transition' quiz nights recently. Amongst some tough competition, these were very impressive achievements!

Finally, sincere thanks to you all for your continued and unrelenting support and encouragement. It is very much appreciated.

Very best wishes



Andrew Taylor

Headteacher

Sunday, 10 May 2020

Excellence for all