



13<sup>th</sup> May 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

We hope you and your family are continuing to stay safe and well during these difficult and worrying times. I am regularly updated by members of the staff team regarding the welfare of our students, following our regular calls and continue to be overwhelmed by the examples of work and acts of kindness by all members of the school community.

You will doubtless have been following the government guidance that has been issued over the last few days, which along with other measures, includes the potential partial reopening of schools from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020. These announcements have been accompanied by a significant amount of communication from the Department for Education and we are shortly expecting further guidance specific to secondary schools. What is clear so far for us, is that the focus appears to be on students in Years 10 and 12 having the opportunity to come into school for some face to face contact with their teachers at some point during the second half of the summer term. Undoubtedly, this will look very different to normal school routines but it is aimed at giving these students, who face important exams next summer, additional support to supplement the remote learning which is being provided.

We are currently working through the guidance and starting to formulate plans for how we can safely achieve what the government has set out. However, it is fair to say that we still have a number of questions, which we are hoping will be answered with future government guidance. As educational professionals, we all share the desire for our students to be back in school, learning and socialising with their friends, but only when it is safe for everyone concerned for them to do so. Our overriding priority is, and always will be, the safety and wellbeing of our students and staff and before we take any steps to partially reopen, we will ensure that we have all appropriate systems and procedures in place to protect our staff and students.

Once we have the full guidance and have been able to formulate clear plans as to what this looks like and how to implement it, we will share these with you. Our aim is for our plans to provide the reassurances that we all need that we have appropriate control measures in place; however, as always we would be happy to speak with any parents/carers who still have any remaining concerns. Please be assured that we have the best interests of our students and staff at the heart of any decisions we make.

What is clear from the guidance as it stands is that online learning will continue to be an essential part of our education offer for all students, especially those in Years 7,8 and 9, who it would appear at the moment will not be returning to school until September.

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# BENTON PARK SCHOOL

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With this in mind, we will continue to work and develop our practice in delivery of online learning and the feedback from parents and students to our recent survey on this was invaluable in helping us to get this right for our students. We are aware that remote learning brings different challenges for each of our students and all we would ask is that students continue to work hard on the learning set, to do the best they possibly can and to always seek help and support from their teachers if they experience any difficulties with the work. Our provision for vulnerable children and those of key workers will continue as at present.

Like all of us, I am sure you have a number of questions and concerns following the latest announcements. It is also clear that the government roadmap could change over the coming weeks depending on how things develop with the easing of restrictions. Therefore, once again, I would ask for your patience whilst we work through the complex issues involved with this situation and as soon as we are able to, we will communicate with you further.

Thank you for your continued support and many kind words during this really difficult time for us all.

Yours sincerely

Delia Martin  
Headteacher

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