

7 June 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

You will no doubt have seen from the Prime Minister's press conference of Sunday 24 May, and in the media since, that from 15 June at the earliest secondary schools will be permitted 'to provide some contact for Year 10 and Year 12 students to help them prepare for exams next year, with up to a quarter of these students in [school] at any point.' This has been confirmed in the guidance published since by the Department for Education (DfE 2020i in the links provided at the end of this letter), namely that 'subject to the government's 5 tests being met... from the week commencing 15 June [secondary schools] can invite year 10 and 12 pupils... back into school for some face-to-face support with their teachers, ... to supplement the remote education... which should remain the predominant mode of education during this term for pupils in these year groups.' As you know we are currently very busy in College drawing up plans to facilitate this safely.

Over the coming few days we will share our plans with you. The safety of students and our staff is paramount and it is obvious that the College will feel very different when the students return as we impose the rules of social distancing and reiterate the need for personal hygiene. It is essential that I draw these to your attention in advance of the 15<sup>th</sup> June so that you can reinforce the need for compliance and vigilance with your child.

I am aware that you will be very keen to have some clarity over which days your child will be invited in and what we will offer on those days. Our plans are very close to completion and I will be in a position to share these with you early this week so that you have time to make any necessary arrangements.

Today, I want to cover a few points that hopefully will ease some of your concerns. Please forgive another long letter. I have tried to bullet point as much as I can but there is so much to share with you now and in the coming week to ensure that we are all prepared for the return of the Year 10 and 12 students. I have added sub-headings as appropriate to try to break up the information for you. Can I ask that you complete the survey as soon as possible so that we can develop our plans further? If on reading this letter you have any questions, please do email these in and I will respond to these as soon as I can.

### **'Clinical Vulnerabilities' Survey**

Thank you very much to those families who completed our Y10 and Y12 'Clinical Vulnerabilities' survey recently. As I explained in my letter of 15 May, this survey was an important part of the risk assessment we have been undertaking before we proceed, with caution, with any plans to offer 'some face to face support' for our Y10 and Y12 students. 78% of families completed the survey, but this unfortunately means that there are 80 students for whom we have not received information about the clinical vulnerabilities of their children and members of their household

that our risk assessment must demand. Please note that we will not be able to offer any provision for any student for whom we do not receive a completed survey. Without parental confirmation about the clinical vulnerabilities of their children and household members, our efforts to mitigate potential risk of transmission will be undermined. We have opened this survey again for those who did not complete it originally, and it will close at 10pm Monday 8 June **(for clarity, if you completed the survey originally, you do not need to complete it again):**

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=kG0HO7J4vUqeBcIPJiicRjnwSebDr4NDqtvBush-3nFUNjvXVzhUNDICMURQWDFCOU5ZREczUTVDWi4u>

Should you have any problems completing the survey please get in touch so that we can record the information.

We will be in contact over the course of the coming week with any families we need to as a result of the information we have gathered from the survey, specifically to advise those who will not be able to attend or to discuss attendance with those whose situation may mean they are able to, but may be worried about doing so.

Should your child be eligible to return for the albeit limited opportunities from 15 June for some face to face support, may I remind you that the decision to take up the provision the College will offer is entirely yours. There is no compulsion for you to take up the offer and all absences will be authorised. Whilst the Department for Education 'strongly encourage' students to attend when permitted, unless your child is self-isolating or clinically extremely vulnerable (when of course they must not attend), whether to send your child to school or not is, ultimately, your decision. We want you to know that whilst we are doing our very best to make attendance to this 'face to face support' worth it, and that we will align such provision with the remote learning we will continue to of course provide, we also want you to know that we will respect your decision and will not pressure anyone. We want you to know that we will be sensitive to any anxieties you may understandably have, but also that we will not abdicate our duty nor shirk our responsibility to support you and your children.

### **Year 10 and 12 Attendance Survey**

It would help our logistical planning enormously to gauge the likely numbers in attendance, so I would be grateful if you could complete the brief 'Attendance Intentions' survey indication what your intentions would be by **10pm Monday 8 June:**

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=kG0HO7J4vUqeBcIPJiicRjnwSebDr4NDqtvBush-3nFUN0RCSVQ5RUNZQjVRNIRZMjUzUINFMIUwQS4u>

Please note that on the days when eligible children will be invited into school for the face to face support we are able to offer, we must report attendance and absence to the DfE. Whilst, to reiterate, all absences will be 'authorised,' we must give specific reasons for any such absence, specifically whether your child is not attending because of:

- Illness (a suspected or confirmed case of COVI-19).

- Illness (not COVID-19 suspected).
- Shielding for themselves or any other family member.
- Self or household isolation.
- Other reason.

To this end, if your child is eligible for attendance, on days when your child is invited in, should they not be attending for any of the above reasons, we would ask you to please contact the school as you would for any normal absence from school, but please state one of the reasons given above.

Please remember that the 'face to face support' we are able to provide for our Y10 and Y12 students has been deliberately 'limited' (i.e. no more than one quarter in school at any one time) in order to help continue to mitigate the risk of transmission. We have modelled what the 'face-to-face support' for our Y10 and Y12 students will look like, using the best available evidence, and we will provide you with more detail about this in the coming week. The key to the provision we will be provide is that it must '*supplement* [my emphasis] remote education,' which it is vitally important to recognise will 'remain the predominant mode of education during this term.' We are currently modelling such provision through the lens of a large body of empirical evidence which shows that learners who are more self-regulated are more effective learners, are more persistent, more resourceful and confident, and ultimately higher achievers. But please let me reassure you that everything we are doing, everything we have modelled and considered, is being done through our determination to uphold our professional duty to do what is best for your children.

### **Pupils with Symptoms Must Not Attend College**

Any student showing symptoms of any illness whether this be Covid-19 or any other illness (including hay fever) must not come into College. This is vital for their own safety as well as for the safety of others in College.

### **Transport**

- We are in regular contact with Devon County Council regarding the school buses.
- The advice which we have received from them is that where possible students should come to and from College by car.
- If this is not possible Devon County Council will provide buses for anyone that needs them.
- We are seeking clarification but it is our understanding that the new rule regarding the wearing of facemasks on public transport does not apply to school buses.

### **Arrangements for Arrival and Departure to and from College**

- The start of the College day will be at the normal time.
- Wardhaves will not be in use for Sixth Form students at this time. All sixth form lessons will take place in the main building of the College.

- Students arriving on buses will be asked to remain on the bus on arrival until a member of staff asks them to dismount.
- Students will be asked to queue from Reception at 2 metre intervals.
- Students will be asked to use hand sanitiser before entering the building.
- Students will know in advance their allocated room for the day (Students will remain in the same room all day.)
- At the end of the day students from Okehampton and those being picked up by parents will be dismissed one class at a time and be able to make their way home.
- Students waiting for buses will stay in their allocated room until the buses arrive. The member of staff on duty will call each bus by radio.

### **Social Distancing Arrangements and Expectations**

- On arrival at College, students will be asked to distance themselves 2 metres apart on the drive and to sanitise their hands.
- Once in the building everyone will adhere to the one-way system which has been set up.
- The 'up only' and 'down only' staircases that the students are familiar with have been incorporated into this one-way system.
- The students will be expected to stay 2m apart. There will be 2 metre markers on the floor of the corridors to support them in this.
- In order for social distancing to be maintained in the classroom, all superfluous chairs have been removed from the classrooms.
- The chairs that remain are located above a marker on the floor. Students need to keep their chair over the marker at all times.
- Student will enter the class room one at a time and will fill the chairs starting with the ones furthest from the classroom door.
- Students will not be able to leave their seat without permission.

### **Hygiene Controls**

- Students will sanitise their hands on the drive before coming into the building.
- Each classroom will have sanitiser and paper towels available for use during the course of the day.
- The classroom itself will be cleaned twice a day in accordance with the DMAT Cleaning Policy.
- Soap and water will be available in the toilets. This will be monitored throughout the day but should a student discover that the soap has been removed they will be able to ask for more at Reception.
- Cleaning staff will be on hand all day.

## **Equipment**

- Please ensure that your child has all the equipment they will need to be self-contained for the day including any food and drink. (Water will be available at College but the drinking fountains will not be in use).

## **Toilets**

- Students will be allocated a toilet block to use. Each toilet block will be associated with specific teaching rooms. Students will use the same allocated toilet block at breaktimes.
- No more than 2 students will be able to use each toilet block at any one time and they will only be able to use the block associated with their teaching room.
- In order to ensure that only 2 students are in the toilet at any time students will not be able to leave the classroom to use a toilet without a 'toilet token'.
- At breaktimes toilets will be monitored by staff.
- There will be soap and water available in the toilets.
  - The toilets will be checked regularly to ensure that soap is available. If, however soap has been removed, students will be able to ask for more at Reception.
  - Scientific evidence shows that soap and water are effective in the fight against the infection regardless of the temperature of the water.
  - All toilet blocks have hot water in them, as with hot water at home, the tap may need to be run before the water becomes hot if the tap hasn't been used for a while.
- The hand driers will not be available.
- Paper towels will be available in all the toilet blocks and will need to be disposed of, using the bins also to be found in the block.

As I said earlier, I am aware that this is another long letter with a great deal of information in it so I appreciate you taking the time to read it and completing the surveys. I will write again in the coming days as we complete more planning. These are very difficult times and it is important that you know that we are here to support you and the students so please don't hesitate to get in touch over any uncertainties you may have.

As ever please look after yourselves and stay safe.

Best wishes,



**Derrick Brett**  
Principal

## Select Links to Current Advice

(Links to advice and guidance with specific reference to information included in this letter.)

- Cabinet Office. (2020, May 11). Staying alert and safe (social distancing). Retrieved from <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing>
- Department for Education. (2020a, May 10). What parents and carers need to know about schools, colleges and other education settings during the coronavirus outbreak. Retrieved from <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers>
- Department for Education. (2020b, May 12). Actions for educational and childcare settings to prepare for wider opening from 1 June 2020. Retrieved from <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-educational-and-childcare-settings-to-prepare-for-wider-opening-from-1-june-2020>
- Department for Education. (2020c, May 12). Coronavirus (COVID-19): implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings. Retrieved from <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings>
- Department for Education. (2020d, May 15). Planning guide for primary schools. Retrieved from <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preparing-for-the-wider-opening-of-schools-from-1-june/planning-guide-for-primary-schools>
- Department for Education. (2020e, May 16). Education Secretary's statement on coronavirus (COVID-19): 16 May. Retrieved from <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/education-secretarys-statement-on-coronavirus-covid-19-16-may>
- Department for Education. (2020f, May 18). Opening schools for more children and young people: initial planning framework for schools in England. Retrieved from <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-educational-and-childcare-settings-to-prepare-for-wider-opening-from-1-june-2020/opening-schools-for-more-children-and-young-people-initial-planning-framework-for-schools-in-england>
- Department for Education. (2020g, May 19). Opening schools and educational settings to more pupils from 1 June: guidance for parents and carers. Retrieved from <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/reopening-schools-and-other-educational-settings-from-1-june>
- Department for Education. (2020h, May 21). Help secondary school children continue their education during coronavirus (COVID-19). Retrieved from <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/help-secondary-school-children-continue-their-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19>
- Department for Education. (2020i, May 25). Preparing for the wider opening of schools from 1 June. Retrieved from <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preparing-for-the-wider-opening-of-schools-from-1-june>

- Prime Minister's Office. (2020, May 10). PM address to the nation on coronavirus: 10 May 2020. Retrieved from <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/pm-address-to-the-nation-on-coronavirus-10-may-2020>
- Prime Minister's Office. (2020, May 24). PM press conference statement: 24 May 2020. Retrieved from <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/pm-press-conference-statement-24-may-2020>
- Public Health England. (2020, May 5). COVID-19: guidance on shielding and protecting people defined on medical grounds as extremely vulnerable. Retrieved from <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19>



