

15th May 2020



King Henry VIII Senior School
Warwick Road
Coventry
CV3 6AQ

Headmaster: Jason Slack BSc, MA Ed

Dear Parent,

I trust that you are still managing to keep healthy and safe and that your families are staying fit and well. There has been lots of media coverage in the last week regarding a potential re-opening of schools and I thought that some specific communication would help reassure you that this issue is occupying a significant amount of deliberation at the minute regarding the best route forward.

The latest guidance from the Government states, 'We will ask secondary schools ... to offer some face-to-face support to supplement the remote education of year 10 and year 12 students who are due to take key exams next year ...'

The full guidance can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings#class-or-group-sizes>

Unfortunately, there is no further detail as to what this actually means and there is no commitment to a firm date. Our priority will always be the safety and welfare of our community; pupils as well as staff. The social distancing guidelines that will have to be followed within a school setting will mean that lessons are delivered in much smaller classes. Extensive mixing of children within different teaching groups and sets should also be avoided. The practicalities of this are not easily overcome in Years 10 and 12, and the staffing required will risk diminishing our online learning provision for all pupils, which is proving to be positive for the most part. I'm hoping that the results of exam week, which is taking place next week, won't change the credibility of this last sentence!

However, I don't underestimate the value of more direct support from teachers, and this is particularly important with pupils closer to external examinations. I'm also of the opinion that allowing pupils out of the home so that they can come into school, in whichever way we can make it work, will have a positive impact on mental health.

Of course, ensuring everyone's safety whilst balancing the educational benefits for the entire school community within this framework is not easy and requires careful thought. All schools are seeking further clarity regarding the implementation of social distancing guidelines and how to protect everyone, as well as the best route forward to balance the educational provision for all pupils.

The purpose of this letter is to reassure you that I am aware of the most recent guidelines, and to ask you for your patience as we seek to understand how best to implement them. It is to the benefit of everyone that we follow this guidance whilst continuing to provide a quality education for everyone.

I will write to you once more when a positive route forward has been determined and I thank you for your continuing support in the meantime.

Yours sincerely,



J. Slack
Headmaster