

19th June 2020



King Henry VIII Senior School
Warwick Road
Coventry
CV3 6AQ

Headmaster: Jason Slack BSc, MA Ed

Dear Parent,

Three weeks into the half term and they seem to have ‘flown by’. It’s been wonderful to have more pupils on the school site. This last week has seen all of Year 10 pupils invited into school for a day of science teaching and Games. Around three quarters of the children attended and very much appreciated the step towards normality and the opportunity to see friends. You will recall from my previous letter that this was ‘stage 1’ of our plan for pupils to come into school. Stage 2 starts next week.

Pupils in School

Stage 2 – w/c 22nd June (Year 12)

A day of pastoral support, study skills and careers mentoring for all Year 12 pupils will take place next week. Each tutor group will form its own ‘bubble’ and there will be just two tutor groups invited into school on any particular day. Mrs Dowding, Head of Sixth Form, has put together a programme that will support the pupils with sessions on end of year examination review, UCAS advice, study skills, etc. This will include a 1:1 meeting with a member of the sixth form pastoral team for all Year 12 pupils. Details have been sent to parents and pupils and we look forward to seeing the pupils next week.

Stage 3 – w/c 29th June (Year 10)

Mr Sewell has put together a programme which will allow all year 10 pupils one or two afternoons in school to complete lessons in the practical subjects; Drama, Design Technology, Art and Music. This will cover two thirds of the pupils in the year group. Sadly, adding more subjects to this list was impossible due to the extensive mixing of pupils between the groups that would not adhere to the ‘bubble’ principle. I have consulted with Heads of Department to prioritise those subjects that would most benefit from time with pupils in school.

Pupils in Year 10 will also have a pastoral review meeting with a member of the year group pastoral team. Pupils having a lesson in school should be able to arrange this meeting on the same day. Other Year 10 pupils can come into school for this meeting, if they wish. Alternatively, the meeting can be held via ‘Teams’. Further details from Mr Sewell will follow next week.

Stage 4 – Before the end of term (Year 12)

Arrangements will be made for online consultations between pupils, parents, and subject teachers. These will happen remotely following the pastoral support day next week. Teachers will make arrangements with your child for a suitable time when a ‘Teams’ meeting can be held.

Results Days for External Exams (Year 13 and Year 11)

Parents and pupils should know that we are committed to making this as normal a day as possible within the guidelines issued by the Government at that time. I am well aware that so many 'rites of passage' for these year groups have not taken place over the last 3 months (not least the actual sitting of exams). I would not want to deny them the opportunity of collecting and celebrating exam results in the same way as so many previous year groups.

Whilst 'normality' might be 'plan A'. We obviously have to be prepared for 'plan B'. This would probably involve sending out results to pupils electronically as soon as we are allowed on the morning that results are released. This would be followed by an allocated time that pupils can come into school to meet with the relevant pastoral teams and careers team if they require support. Further details will be sent closer to the time when guidance is clearer regarding groups of pupils congregating at the same time.

You might imagine that teachers are rather concerned at the minute that we haven't had the opportunity to collect in text books and other resources previously issued to Year 11 and Year 13 pupils. This is usually done on a 'book return day' which didn't happen this term. We need these text books next year! It is intended that these text books will be collected from pupils on results day. Please look after them until that time.

I know that Mr McKee is also looking at a way of using GCSE results day (if guidance allows) as an opportunity for Year 11 to get together in a way that wasn't possible when the school site closed in March. Further details will follow.

Supervision of Children of 'Keyworkers' in the Summer Holidays

Coventry School Foundation intend to continue the provision of childcare for the children of 'keyworkers' for the first two weeks of the summer holidays. This would start on Monday 13th July. Thereafter, a 'Holiday Club' may be offered by 'King's Camp' at Bablake School for a fee. This 'Holiday Club' would be dependent upon demand and be open to all parents.

The systems we currently have in place for term time would continue. Children will be placed in Bubbles of 15 or less and with a named adult. Sports and creative activities will be planned for the children, with as much time as possible outside.

Keyworkers who wish to express an interest in accessing this provision during the first two weeks should please complete the form via this link:

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=pINqlrqdr0uhXeo5eB2Y9nxfMO4JioxLjSwNijqMrAhUN0FSQlhWUINGTTZWVJRWIJFRU9MVkRCNi4u>

What will things look like in September?

This is a question that is occupying a great deal of thought at the minute. The picture is very dynamic and no definitive view has been put forward by Government. I have been very keen to share with parents over recent months any guidance that schools have had to follow. Nothing has currently been published and there is no 'secret communication' among Headteachers that can accurately predict what will happen in September. The first two principles of my letter dated 21st May still hold:

1. We want to return. This position has been reinforced by the experience of having greater numbers of pupils in school in the last few weeks.
2. The safety of pupils and staff remains paramount.

We are taking the approach of hoping for the best and planning for the worst. If we are allowed to safely operate a normal timetable within our school accommodation then we will be keen to do so. We are also fortunate to have lots of bigger spaces such as the sports hall, the Burgess Hall and the drama studio that could be physically adapted into larger classroom style spaces with partitioning. Smaller class sizes will also help (particularly within the sixth form), and these numbers might be accommodated in larger classrooms. I realise that the uncertainty is causing anxiety and that older children, in particular, will have an eye on external exams in summer 2021. We have the resources to adapt quickly to any guidance given to maximise any opportunity for pupils to get the best possible learning – preferably ‘face to face’.

In the meantime, our main delivery of lessons ‘online’ will continue and please be reassured of our very best efforts. Please get in touch if you have any queries.

Yours sincerely,



J. Slack
Headmaster