



Tring School

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15 May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

Head of School Update

I hope you and your families continue to be well and safe.

The long awaited Prime Minister's Briefing on Sunday certainly didn't deliver the clarity and direction that we had hoped for; in fact it has possibly brought about further confusion and uncertainty - a rock and a hard place come to mind! The prospect of reopening our school is certainly going to be much harder and complex than closing, and that wasn't easy!

The emphasis for the return of secondary schools has changed slightly as the week has progressed and undoubtedly will change again. We are already meeting the expectation of providing students in Years 10 and 12 with face to face support. The ambition is to gradually increase the numbers of students in the school setting, however, I am mindful that I do not want to dilute the outstanding provision that we have in place for all year groups.

The main guidance for secondary schools is:

- *From the week commencing 1 June 2020 at the earliest, 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, alongside the full time provision they are offering to priority groups.*
- *We are, therefore, gradually increasing the numbers of children and young people attending schools and colleges.*
- *Vulnerable children of all year groups continue to be expected and encouraged to attend educational provision where it is appropriate for them to do so.*

There is a phrase that is used in sports coaching 'Sometimes to create space you need to stand still'. That is exactly what I intend to do. In this time of ambiguity and complexity, I need to allow the dust to settle and gain further clarity before we begin to formulate our return to school plan.

I am confident that as a school we are well ahead of many others and already providing a very good learning experience for all of our students. We didn't lose any time at the start of lock down to prepare materials or plan a new approach as we were already set up for online learning. I am very mindful that I don't want to dilute any of this provision. The element of

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education that we are not able to provide as strongly as if we were in school is the social and emotional interaction of students. If we return to school in the current climate we will not be able to provide it either.

By bringing year groups of students into school on a normal timetable we would be placing students in contact with potentially 150 others per day. I do not feel that at this time this would be a responsible action. As lockdown restrictions are potentially lifted over coming weeks, students will be able to socialise with their smaller peer groups in a much more controlled manner and gain the social and emotional connection with their friends.

I will endeavour to have more detail on a phased return for students in next week's update.

Meanwhile, we will continue with our online learning provision. Your feedback has been very useful to ensure that we continue to meet the needs of all by informing the tweaks to our provision over the last half term. Please can I ask you to take 5 minutes to complete a second parent survey which will help us to continually review and refine our provision. [Survey Link](#). This will assist us to see what is working well and what could be improved. The students will be emailed a survey to their school email accounts and if you would encourage them to respond to this, it would be appreciated.

After half term, students will have a weekly hangout with their tutor during one registration per week, as well as a House assembly and our Collective Worship led by Rev's Michelle and Jane which can be accessed [here](#). A further Collective Worship around one of our core values of Hope can also be found [here](#).

Year 7 and 8 appear to be gaining confidence in their learning and are more willing to follow the instructions shared by classroom teachers. If your child has any difficulties in understanding learning tasks, please can I ask you to reassure them to work their way through the instructions as far as they can.

Year 9 have received confirmation of their option choices and will begin a new timetable on Monday 1 June. Mrs Toovey will be sending a presentation home sharing the changes for students as they begin their GCSE courses and how you can help support your child.

Year 10 have started having their Individual Advice and Guidance Appointments with Connexions staff. The feedback so far has been really positive. Students have shared that one thing they have enjoyed during the lockdown is having more time to spend with family members.

Year 11 have received a letter from Mrs Kay this week with details of Internal Assessment content and schedule as well and Sixth Form Induction Day arrangements.

Sadly, yet inevitable, we have received confirmation from Shendish Manor that the Prom will not be able to go ahead on Thursday 25 June. We are working with the venue to see if we could reserve a date in September/October when hopefully restrictions will be eased, if the students wish to have a 'Reunion Prom'.

Year 12 - have received our termly Sixth Form Newsletter this week. I wish the students good luck as they begin end of year assessments next week.

Year 13 - if social distancing permits, we will host a farewell celebration event before University terms and Apprenticeships start.

Have a lovely weekend!

Kind regards

Sally Ambrose
Head of School