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Dear Parents / Carers

Like many of you, I watched the Prime Minister's broadcast on Sunday night which was punctuated with uncertainty. Since then further advice has been published on the return to school for both primary and secondary age children. This can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/reopening-schools-and-other-educational-settings-from-1-june>

The Government have asked Secondary Schools, Sixth Forms and Further Education Colleges to begin some face to face support with Year 10 and Year 12 pupils from 1st June, although it is not expected that these pupils will return on a full-time basis at this stage.

Alongside the restarting of school for some students, the Government has issued guidance on the protective measures schools should put in place; this includes information on class sizes, cleaning regimes, social distancing and how students should mix when in school. The guidance also suggests that if a child displays Covid-19 symptoms and tests positive, the rest of their class, as well as their teacher, would need to self-isolate. Schools are encouraged to make the most of the space in their school building to accommodate the smaller class sizes by holding lessons in sports halls, assembly halls and libraries.

This is going to present a significant challenge to all schools; it will take some time to consider how the detail in the guidance can be fully implemented so that the educational experience in school is safe and meaningful. Like you, I have only just seen the documentation so at this stage I cannot answer all of your questions. I am waiting to receive more information from the Government and Local Authority about what this guidance means for our school in practical terms.

However, I want to share with you some of our preliminary planning so that expectations of students can be managed as we begin to shape future provision. Based on our planning scenario, many of the classes in Year 12 are already below the number described in the guidance and I hope that many Year 12 students will be able to access a portion of their timetable from 1st June, blended with remote learning. Year 10 will present more of a challenge; virtually all class groups will have to be split, students may not necessarily have their previous subject teacher or be with previous groups of students. I will write to you with more details next week.

In the final analysis, Headteachers and Governing Bodies retain the power to make decisions regarding the safety of students and staff based on the assessment of risk. The availability of school staff, the sheer number of pupils, and the sizes of school classrooms and corridors, combined with the need for social distancing measures, may mean that we are not in a position to expand in-school contact in the manner the Government has suggested.

At this juncture there is no guidance for the return of Year 7-Year 9.

Engagement Monitoring

Last week I included in my weekly letter, information about engagement monitoring; this is the process the school uses to check if students have completed remote learning. The majority of students are working well, despite the challenges. The feedback from parents is helpful, some parents report issues around the technology, others have complex home situations. Sadly, there are some youngsters who just have not completed the work, despite suggesting otherwise to parents. A significant amount of information is available on the school website to help students and parents, including descriptions of how to use remote learning platforms. The correspondence we published since the beginning of the lockdown is also on the school website and details these resources.

If your child is struggling, please, in the first instance, contact your child's Form Tutor. The next monitoring point occurs on 15th May.

Year 11 Prom

I wrote to parents in Year 11 on 19th March confirming that it was necessary to cancel the Year 11 Prom. This decision was not taken lightly, there are currently no plans to organise a similar event later in the year. However, it may be possible to find an alternative way to celebrate student success later in the year, albeit on a smaller scale.

Provision for Vulnerable Children and Children of Key Workers

We will continue to offer provision for vulnerable children and children of key workers up until half term, subject to any change in Government strategy. It is assumed that provision for vulnerable children and children of key workers will continue after half term. However, it is unlikely that we will be able to offer holiday provision over half term so that appropriate cleaning can occur and alterations to classrooms be made.

Survey

All students at Oaklands have had to make a rapid adjustment to their style and approach to academic learning in the past two months. Likewise, as teachers we have been learning as we go, and sharing with each other the best methods and practice to ease the transition to remote learning, without learners losing ground in their own studies. As we have all begun to settle somewhat, it would be helpful to consult with your sons and daughters and receive some feedback. Please urge all Oaklands students to complete this short survey on Forms (part of the Microsoft Office tools) so we can identify further improvements. They can anonymise themselves, but we do need to know which their year group is, to be of most use. The survey will be in their Form Group Teams assignments, not email. If you would like to complete it too, please use the following link: [Forms Remote Learning Survey](#)

Online Safety

It is important for parents/carers to be aware of what their children are being asked to do online, what they will be asked to access and who (if anyone) their child will be interacting with. Where parents supplement learning, we emphasise the importance of securing online support from a reputable organisation/individual who can provide evidence they are safe and can be trusted to have access to children.

ThinkUKnow have created a page to support parents and young people online. The site includes home activity packs with simple 15 minute activities to support children's understanding of online safety at a time.

There is also parent support information for primary and secondary age groups.

The resources can be found here: <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/Support-tools/home-activity-worksheets>

Further support for parents to keep their children safe online can be found on our website:

<https://www.oaklandscatholicschool.org/parents/e-safety/>

<https://www.oaklandscatholicschool.org/coronavirus/>

A Few Reminders

Outdoor learning

Hampshire Outdoor Centres has put together a bumper pack of fun activities to challenge minds and boost learning.

<https://lpda9f27a988.hana.ondemand.com/p/xUw5j>

Hampshire Futures

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/hampshirefutures/yourfuture>

Testing for Key Workers

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested>

Prayer for the Day

<https://www.oaklandscatholicschool.org/about-us/catholic-life/daily-prayer/>

Information on Remote Learning

<https://www.oaklandscatholicschool.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Office-365-School-Email-and-OneDrive.pdf>

Educational Psychologist Help for Parents

<https://www.oaklandscatholicschool.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Educational-Psychology-support-for-parents.pdf>

The announcement over the weekend and subsequent guidance are the first small steps in returning schools to normal. The easing of restrictions is conditional on there being no resurgence of the virus, with the Government reserving the option of reverting to a tight lockdown nationally or locally if there are signs of the outbreak flaring up again.

Best wishes, good luck with the week ahead, I will write to you all again next week.

Yours sincerely



Mr Matthew Quinn
Headteacher