

Oaklands Catholic School and Sixth Form College

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Dear Parents/Carers

We are coming to the end of what has been one of the strangest years ever experienced in education. It has been the worst of times and the best of times. I want to thank you all for your support since the middle of March both for the school and for the work that has gone on at home. Significant numbers of parents have written in to thank the school or individual members of staff for the support they have shown. It has not been possible to respond to all of these individually; they have been well received by colleagues, so thank you once again.

We are very much looking forward to seeing students in September.

I want to lay out some of the practicalities for the September start and have included these in a separate document. I would ask that you discuss this with your child.

Currently we will continue with our return to school plan for September:

<i>Tuesday 1st September</i>	<i>Staff INSET</i>
<i>Wednesday 2nd September</i>	<i>Year 7 only</i>
<i>Thursday 3rd September</i>	<i>Year 7, Year 11, Year 12 and Year 13</i>
<i>Friday 4th September</i>	<i>Whole School</i>

In its updated guidance on the wider opening of schools in September, the Government's primary focus is to ensure that all children are back in school in the autumn with education settings working at full capacity. The reopening of schools in the autumn and the guidance issued by the DfE poses a number of challenges for all schools.

There are a number of essential measures that have guided our planning:

- those who are ill are required to stay at home;
- we have incorporated into our procedures a robust hand and respiratory hygiene infection control protocol;
- we have enhanced cleaning arrangements;
- we will engage with NHS Test and Trace when required;
- we are taking steps to minimise potential for contamination.

The safety and wellbeing of all members of our community remains of paramount importance to us and I hope by sharing some of the detail you will be reassured of the thoroughness of the approach we are taking.

In summary:

- The school day will be the same length; the start and finish times will remain the same.
- Lesson lengths during the day will vary to accommodate staggered breaks.
- Attendance at school is mandatory.
- Full school uniform will be required from the start of term in September.
- Students will all require their own equipment as no shared equipment will be allowed.
- All students should have their own small bottle of hand sanitiser.
- There will be a strictly observed control system to manage the movement of students. This will be a key part of our strategy on physical distancing.

Further detail expanding on these points and others can be found by following [this link](#) or by viewing the attached document.

Much of the first week of term will be spent working with students so that they understand the new routines necessary to keep all the community as safe as reasonably possible. In addition, we will be working with students so they understand expectations around behaviour in lessons and around the school site. We will be publishing an addendum to a number of our policies, including Behaviour and Attendance so they are 'COVID' ready. We will publish these just before the start of the Autumn term. The summer break will provide us with the opportunity to fine-tune our policy if directed by further DfE guidance.

It is understandable that families may be anxious about the prospect of their children returning for a variety of reasons, that is why communication and dialogue with us is important.

Our Provision@oaklandscatholicsschool.org email address will remain open over the holiday so parents can raise any concerns they have. It will be checked every Friday and from 24th August it will be checked daily.

Everyone has a different attitude to risk, so it is a question of understanding what the concerns are and for us to explain what steps and measures we are taking to address risks. It may be that further adjustments can be made in light of individual concerns but ultimately parents need to understand that from September, attendance will be compulsory unless a lawful reason for absence applies.

Since starting to write this letter, the Government has changed its position on the wearing of masks in shops. Interestingly this requirement will come into force after the close of the school term. I have already received my first email asking if this will change the position in school. The simple answer is '*don't know*'. If the guidance changes over the summer, we will let you know.

Some of you may be relieved that this will be my last whole school weekly letter, however over the holiday I will send out a few reminders. These will be issued on the 31st July, 14th August and 28th August. We will continue to post relevant information on the school website.

The Oaklands News will be issued to all families on Friday.

So, until we return in September, I hope that you all remain safe and well. We can't wait to see all students in September and again, I can't thank you enough for all you have done over the past four months.

We all wish you a happy rest of the summer.

Yours sincerely



Mr M Quinn
Headteacher