

Coronavirus update – 05/06/2020

Dear Parents and Carers

It was a great joy to witness some of our Junior School pupils return to the College site at the beginning of this week. To see the delight of those children running into the playground to be back with their friends, after all this time, was wonderful to see. I was so pleased that the vast majority of parents chose to send their children back to the College. An enormous amount of planning has been undertaken to make sure that the site and our operations are as safe as possible. This has been in evidence across the course of this week, as we have all got used to social distancing, friendship bubbles, floor markings and changes to our ordinary routines, all of which have made our site as safe as is practicable. I do have to thank Miss Whitwood and her team, who have worked so closely and effectively with the Bursary and Estates teams, to ensure that every little thing has been captured in our planning – from the cleaning protocol of toys to precise line markings on the fields.

As you would expect, we have also been working on the second phase of pupil reintroduction. It still remains our hope that the rest of the Junior School will be able to return for a period of time before the summer holidays begin, and we eagerly await further guidance from the government on this matter. However, given that we are now allowed to facilitate the gradual return of Year 10 and Year 12, from 15 June, we have begun planning for this. As you know, we are very proud of our remote learning offering, and we do not want this phase of return to diminish its credibility for any of the other year groups who are not permitted to return. There are also significant restrictions in place on how many pupils from these year groups are allowed to return and for what purpose. It is with this in mind that we are ensuring a narrow but important focus for the return of these year groups:

- 1) Pastoral contact and a focus on pupil wellbeing
- 2) Academic and SEND support for those who need it
- 3) Internal exams for Year 12 who would like to sit them before the summer
- 4) Science exams for Year 10 who are trying to establish the best GCSE pathway

On Monday, I am chairing another meeting of the Return to College Working Group, where we will be discussing these arrangements in far more detail, and how they affect the College's risk assessment. It is my hope that by the middle of next week you will be in receipt of detailed planning documents from the Senior School pastoral teams to outline what we are intending to do, with whom and, most importantly, an outline of all we will be doing to keep everyone safe. Prior to this more detailed information being circulated, I am in a position to outline some of the key safety measures that are already in place for the College site and listed in our comprehensive risk assessment.

- Staggered arrival and departure times will be implemented to avoid rush hour and mass arrival of pupils

- Where queues are expected, appropriate line marking will be in place to help students adhere to 2m distancing
- Classroom numbers will be restricted to ensure appropriate distancing measures are in place, in accordance with the latest Government advice. Spacer desks, notices and floor markings will be used to remind students of their allotted areas.
- Students will bring their own classroom equipment and will be reminded not to share or borrow other students' belongings.
- Classroom doors and windows will remain open.
- Access to bathrooms will be restricted to ensure that appropriate distancing and handwashing takes place.
- Classes and recreational times will occur in selected 'bubbles' wherever possible, to reduce the risk of cross contamination.
- Whilst it is not a requirement for students or staff to wear PPE in the College, we will support individual choice on this matter.
- Members of the cleaning team will be on site every day to ensure that rooms and key contact points are cleaned thoroughly and regularly throughout the day.
- The College's Wellness Centre will be open and staffed by a full-time nurse. A separate isolation area will also set up with appropriate PPE, in line with the latest Government guidance.

I hope this provides you with some reassurance of all the work that is currently underway at the College, but, as I say, more detailed information will follow next week.

I am very conscious that for Years 7 – 9 there will not be a phase of return before the summer holiday and I am aware that this will be very challenging for the young people to understand and accept. We are doing everything we can to help support them by the means at our disposal and further pastoral guidance will be provided for these year groups next week.

In other news from this week, the calculation and submission of exam grades continues. Mr Holmes will be writing to Years 11 and 13 at the end of next week to update you more fully on where we are in this process. Mr Brewer will also be in touch with Year 12s by the end of next week with their exam timetables and logistics for those sitting internal exams this side of summer. The enrichment projects for Lower School, which begin in week 4 of this half term have been launched today, entitled 'The Festival of Curiosity', and I am delighted by the exciting array of options available for your children. Do click [HERE](#) to find out more – your children should have a copy of this document to study across the course of this week.

There continue to be some members of our staff who are really struggling, with circumstances beyond their control, to deliver on the ambitious expectations we set for ourselves in the delivery of remote learning. The first group of staff within this category are those who have temporarily left the College to go on parental leave: Mrs McLellan in MFL, Mr Ford in Physics, and Mr Bradley in English. We have chosen not to employ cover teachers to cover the work of these teachers for these last few weeks of this term, largely because it would take us longer to get new staff acquainted with our remote learning processes than the time that is left for delivery. As such we have taken the decision to do our

very best to cover these classes internally. There are a handful of other staff who are finding it particularly challenging to deliver on the remote learning expectations and I ask for your compassion and understanding in Science, in particular, where the staff are doing their very best to continue the delivery of lessons in very difficult circumstances.

Once this next phase of pupil re-introduction is underway, from June 15, we will turn our attention to the next phase, which will see the development of a forward-planning exercise, looking at site management and preparation over the summer and a detailed analysis of how we envisage the College operating from September, including the now inevitable modifications to our way of working. This will be a sizeable piece of work but we hope will result in a comprehensive piece of literature for you to read at the end of this term and will cover the whole range of our operations and strategy.

As you know, I like to end by identifying a highlight of the week, and today it was a particular delight to have a sneak preview into our brand new woodland classroom, being constructed behind the Sports Hall for the benefit of our Junior School pupils. It represents a great deal of creativity and hard work from the Estates team and I know that the pupils are going to love the new facility as well as helping to shape it, by designing bug hotels and other essential features!

With thanks to you all for your continued support and have a very good weekend.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N P Hewlett', written in a cursive style.

Mr N P Hewlett
Headmaster