



Dear parent/carer

Thank you for your overwhelming support over the past few months. As you are no doubt aware, the government has announced it wishes to introduce a phased wider opening of schools from 1st June. We are asked, in particular, to plan to provide some 'face to face' time for students in Years 10 and 12 with staff over the remainder of this academic year. We would also want to continue to be open to priority groups including children of key workers and to ensure the best remote learning experiences for those still not in school.

The past few months have not been ideal for any child, but I am not surprised that the government's focus initially is on improving access to teachers for students in Years 10 and 12. Whilst we have done our best to make the remote learning experience as good as we can in the circumstances, the phased introduction of face to face contact with teachers can be seen as a necessary route towards an eventual return to normal school for all at some point.

The government has stated that we can expect more detailed guidance specifically for secondary schools in due course, but in the meantime, we are planning a phased return for these year groups for after the half term break based on the current guidance. Our plans will only be successful if we are also able to mitigate any potential risk to staff and students. It is, unfortunately, not a return to normal lessons for these students. We will do what we can, however, to support them during this critical time of their education. At present there are no plans for Years 7, 8 and 9 to return to the School site other than the priority groups already identified.

I set out below what we are aiming to do for Years 10 and 12. There are likely to be two phases and even these plans are subject to change depending on the government's announcements and guidelines, along with staff availability and ongoing risk assessment.

Phase 1

Students in Years 10 and 12 will attend a series of individual meetings with their Form Tutors and other available staff in accordance with a strict timetable. There will be clear expectations for social distancing and general behaviour on site. We will use these meetings to collect and share information about each child's wellbeing and learning over the Covid-19 period and to consider how we can support them further. These meetings will inform how Phase 2 might be best organised to support getting all students as close as possible to being 'back on track'. We are planning for meetings to begin at the earliest on Wednesday, 3rd June and it will take some time before all students will have completed one meeting. Further meetings will be arranged and remote learning completed in between.

Phase 2

This will be an appropriate scaling up of provision for Years 10 and 12, with an aim to include subject specific learning opportunities, whilst still minimising contact between different groups of people and maintaining appropriate social distancing. As government guidelines become more detailed, we will be able to formulate what this provision will look like and when it may start.

Unfortunately, it will not be possible to provide any catering facilities at school for the remainder of this term. Children on site during lunchtime will need to continue to bring a packed lunch. Parents whose children are entitled to a Free School Meal will continue to be provided with e-vouchers for use in the supermarkets.

Over recent weeks we have been unable to monitor our switchboard fully. We hope that this will be open again during school hours after half term, although the simplest way to get messages to us is via the office@darrickwood.bromley.sch.uk email address.

Since we are planning for increased numbers of staff and students on the site after half term, in line with government guidance, parents must not enter the School site without an agreed prior appointment.

We will communicate further with parents of Years 10 and 12 after half term in relation to when their child is expected to come into school and also how this will be arranged.

Those in Years 7, 8 and 9 should continue to complete their learning remotely and we are simultaneously aiming to make this the best it can be. Teachers will also continue to set work for Years 10 and 12 to complete at home.

Again, thank you for your support. Like you, I long for a return to normality but in the meantime continue to adapt around the challenges we face and remain committed to supporting all the students of Darrick Wood School in whichever way I can.

Yours sincerely

Dr M J Airey
Head Teacher