

10 July 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

I hope that this letter finds you well and you and your families are managing to stay safe. I apologise for its length as it is a long letter.

I am aiming to write to all parents and carers by the end of next week with details of the opening of school in September for all our students.

Please find our weekly update below:

Secondary School Guidance

Last Thursday, 2nd July the Government released the guidance for the full reopening of secondary schools in September. We cannot wait to open our doors to our students again, but remain committed to doing so in a way which has the health and well-being of your child, our staff and the wider communities' at its heart. The guidance was clear that schools will re-open, full time from the start of the new academic year, with additional precautions in place as prevalence of Covid-19 has decreased. The full guidance can be viewed by using the link [here](#).

Control measures – Prevention

The main protective measures which 'must be in place in all schools, all the time' are:

- Contact with individuals who are unwell is minimised – they will not attend school (as per self-isolation guidance)
- Frequent hand washing and sanitising – promoting good hand hygiene
- Follow the 'Catch it, Bin it, Kill it' model for good respiratory hygiene
- Enhanced cleaning arrangements

The guidance states these measures 'must be properly considered'

- Minimise contact by adhering to social distancing guidance where possible
- Active engagement with NHS Test and Trace procedures

Changes for September

We have almost completed our risk assessment for September which will then be validated by our Trust and the unions. As I have already mentioned, much fuller detail will be sent out next week, however some of your questions may be answered below. Our initial planning follows a 'Schools within School' model is likely to include:

- The start and end of the school day being slightly staggered
- Each Year group having the vast majority of their lessons in a set of adjacent classes; a zone
- Year group bubbles will be in place with designated year group toilets
- Students being placed in consistent groups wherever possible and contact between groups will be avoided

- Staggered lunches and breaks will be taken in separate areas of school
- Classrooms will be arranged with desks in rows with all seats facing forwards
- Staff will maintain their distance from students and each other and lessons will be delivered from a teacher technical area
- Students will be given their own 'resource pack' on their first day in school which will contain the basic equipment that they will require

Uniform

The guidance clearly states that normal arrangements regarding clothing can resume. Students will be required to wear full uniform and staff will need to wear business dress. Please see our website with further details [here](#).

Face to face provision

Our Year 10 students have had another great week as they continue to work exceptionally hard. It has been lovely to see our Year 7 parents/carers this week for our face to face provision, we do understand individual family circumstances have meant that this is not possible for all. We thank our families for the manner in which they have adhered to and respected our hygiene procedures. It is certainly a different way of working than we are all used to. We are hoping to make contact with families where bookings haven't been made to assist and support prior to the end of term. Our staff that have been delivering the face to face meetings have really enjoyed meeting with families even where they are not the child's usual form tutor. Although the way we have conducted our meetings has not been in a format that we have been used to, staff have spoken very highly of the opportunity to engage with young people and hear about everything that they have been doing during the period of school closures. We look towards welcoming our Year 8 and 9 families on site next week.

Assessments

All families should have received our latest short report home. We thank you for your understanding around the postage delays that have meant some of you are yet to receive specific assessment feedback. We also appreciate that a small number of families may also be experiencing delays with assessments where they have not arrived at their address. We understand the difficulties that this period has caused our community and wanted to reassure families that our assessment data is being used to inform our recovery curriculum and wider school intervention plans. **Students will not be at a disadvantage on their return to school, if we have been unable to report on their assessment data at this stage.**

Year 6/7 Transition

We will be writing to parents and carers of students who will be starting with us in Year 7. We will be confirming arrangements for the first week back but I can confirm that Year 7 students will be in school on Wednesday 2 September with Year 11 for the FULL day before the whole school return back on Thursday 3 September.

Year 11 Results

Further guidance will follow that is specific to Year 11 families around their results day. It has been a very challenging time for our Year 11 students, families and teaching staff owing to circumstances beyond our control. We had hoped to celebrate the end of the academic year and we extend our regret that we

have had to cancel the Year 11 prom. This decision was taken with the interests of staff, students and the wider community with safety at the core.

Recovery Curriculum

All of our Curriculum Team Leaders and Trust directors have been reconsidering the curriculum for next year to ensure our students do not miss out. This will not mean placing any extra pressure on our students but will be very much focused on making 'every minute count'. The biggest change has been in enabling our Year 8 students take an initial Option for Year 9; phase 1. I thank the parents/carers of our Year 8 students for your support with this. If there are any questions regarding the options process, Mrs Gregory is leading on this and will be able to assist and support at gregoryh@dartonacademy.org.uk.

Channel 4 Master Classes

For any student interested in a career in Film and TV production, Channel 4 are running a series of master classes for young people. These will take place over 4 weeks from 9th July, and it will involve presentations from people who are already working in the industry. To register, go to <https://rsvp.theworldsbest.events/o7rr5>

Thank you for your continued support and cooperation and as ever, please do email info@dartonacademy.org.uk or briggse@dartonacademy if you have any queries.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'E Briggs'.

Elaine Briggs
Associate Principal