



Leventhorpe
a business and enterprise academy

22 May 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

I hope you are all well and managing under the current national restrictions.

Next week 25-31 May is half term week and teachers will not be setting online work during the holiday period. Work will be set from 1st June. This was supposed to be an INSET day, but this is being rescheduled so that the time can be used for staff training at a later date.

You are probably aware of the media coverage about the phased re-opening of schools. Since the Prime Minister made his announcements on May 10th about lockdown restrictions, this has been a hot topic of discussion. However, guidance has not always been clear and there has been a daily drip-feed of additional information which we have had to consider. I would like to update you on the current position and how Leventhorpe are planning to respond.

The key concerns being raised are around the safety and welfare of students and staff, in particular the need to mitigate against the risks of transmission of Covid-19 by a wider return to the school site. This concern needs balancing against the view that a return to school will be beneficial for students in terms of their learning and progress, as well as benefits to their social and emotional well-being. We need to balance these concerns; knowing that we want our students to return to classroom lessons, but we also need to ensure that we have taken appropriate steps to mitigate against the risks of the virus in terms of our site and our expectations and procedures.

In terms of expectations for the rest of this term our current thinking is as follows. Please note this is conditional on changes to national guidance and developments.

Years 7 to 9

Students in Years 7, 8 and 9 will not physically return to school before September. They will continue with online learning tasks set by teachers. We are looking at our offer and are planning to increase opportunities for engagement with class teachers and subject specialists. If there are barriers to learning, we encourage students and parents to contact either form tutors or Heads of Year for general issues, or subject teachers or Heads of Subject/Faculty for subject specific issues. We are encouraging staff to use short videos to explain tasks or key content and we will be formalising the opportunities for students to ask questions or have scheduled times when students can contact staff.

Years 10 and 12

The Prime Minister stated that students in Years 10 and 12 should have opportunities for face to face contact with their teachers towards the end of term in addition to the work being set online. We are still waiting for guidance on what the specific expectations are for this. We have considered different approaches and are planning that this will start with a process of self-review by the students. They will be asked to complete a self-review for each of their subjects, which will focus on how they have been managing the online work. We will then arrange for students to come to school and discuss their self-review with their subject teachers. Where this is not possible, these discussions will take place



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virtually. Teachers will give students specific targets based on the work that has been submitted and they will discuss additional support or extra challenge on a one-one basis. After the reviews we will then organise a series of clinics for invited students to attend. These will be in-school and will focus on specific subjects. Some clinics will provide additional support to ensure students understand the topics and key concepts that have been covered in the online tasks. Some clinics will provide additional challenge activities for students who would benefit from this approach.

We are currently planning our health and safety adaptations that will be necessary to increase the number of students and staff on-site. We are assessing risks and taking steps to mitigate these by changing our processes and adapting our expectations for staff and students. This activity is being carried out using guidance documents and a considered view of our context and our site.

I hope you understand the need for caution. I want to ensure that we get the phased return right and we are not expecting to start the process of face to face discussions until the middle of June. We will contact parents and students in Years 10 and 12 with more details in the first week back after half term. This will include a more detailed outline of our offer with broad timescales and an opportunity for you to feedback in terms of your expected engagement. We understand many parents will be unwilling to send their children back to school at this time and we will need to assess the likely response rates to assist our planning.

Reminders for Everyone

Please contact us if you have concerns about your children and how they are managing. We have been tracking student engagement and have been contacting parents when we are noticing issues, but you may wish to discuss concerns. Please contact Form Tutors or Heads of Year in the first instance.

If concerns relate to safeguarding issues, please contact Mr Francis or Mrs Price.

If you have issues related to Key Worker or the voucher scheme for school meals please contact Mrs Price.

Please take a pragmatic common-sense approach to work set. If students are spending too long on any specific task, they should submit and let the teacher know the reason it was taking so long. It is important to make sure students have opportunities to focus on other activities like exercise, wider reading, chat time with friends etc.

If you are finding that your children are getting through all their tasks really quickly, please take time to check their work against the instructions and encourage them to add detail and depth. There are a range of additional resources and tasks that have been published, both on the website and in previous communications, that could be used when required.

Members of the local community have expressed concerns about small numbers of unsupervised young people ignoring the social distancing guidelines by meeting together. We would urge all parents to be clear with their children about expectations if they are allowed to leave the family home



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alone. As a reminder, the school site is closed, and students should not try to access the field at any time. We have evidence that young people are breaking into the site and gathering on the field. This morning we have found significant numbers of nitrous oxide canisters and balloons. We are reporting this to the police. I have expressed concerns about the use of these canisters in previous messages. Can I re-enforce the importance for parents of knowing where your children are, who they are with and what they are doing. This relates to compliance with national lockdown guidelines as well as protecting our young people from the drug issues that are prevalent in the area.

Many of you are probably wondering about what will happen in September. We have started our contingency planning for September by modelling various scenarios, but this is difficult as there are a lot of 'what if's' at present. Our current priority is to manage the rest of this term and we will update you all as clarity emerges over the rest of term regarding our plans for September.

I hope you enjoy half term week. There is an opportunity to focus on something other than school work.

Please stay safe and enjoy the break.

Malcolm White