



June 1st 2020

Dear Parents & Carers of Students in Year 10,

I hope this letter finds you safe and well. When I wrote to you before Half Term, we were still waiting for Government Guidance on extending our on-site offer to support students in Year 10 at this crucial time in their education. We finally received that guidance during Half Term, with confirmation that secondary schools are now expected to offer face to face support for Yr10 and Yr12 students from **June 15th**, subject to the scientific advice that it is safe to do so at that time.

The Guidance makes clear the ambition to ensure all students in Year 10 receive some face-to-face support on site, while continuing with their learning from home for the majority of their time. We are only allowed to accommodate 25% of the cohort at any time and are expected to design an offer that involves strict social distancing arrangements until further notice. As a result, I set out below the details of how we expect to operate for the remainder of this academic year and I also attach a link to a very **important survey** that we need you to complete so we can properly plan our next steps which can be found here: <https://bit.ly/2AtfQz4>

Virtual School Next Steps

All students, including Year 10, will continue with their virtual school education programme. The survey attached asks you to identify any barriers to your child learning from home – we are especially keen to consider how we might help every student in Year 10 access all of their work and additional study support on-line.

We believe that we can further support our students by using video contact, audio contact and/or on-line live text chat support. This will include regular contact from Form Tutors and a weekly session with each subject teacher. Students will be able to get help if they have got stuck with the week's work and the teacher will also be able to explain the work that is set for the following week. This will help students stay on track and will also help staff plan the work being set.

The Year 10 timetable is being adjusted to show when subject support sessions will take place for your child and will be issued to begin Monday June 15th.

We use a safe environment called Microsoft Teams for on-line study support. Microsoft Teams uses students' school email address and works through our school platform, meeting all of our safeguarding requirements. To access Microsoft teams, students need a device with internet access – either a laptop or a phone. For video-conferencing the device needs a camera.

Students can participate in video-calls with or without a camera on, so they may just listen in to a study support or well-being session or they can choose to be visible on camera. All video-sessions and audio-sessions will be recorded by the member of staff for safety purposes.

The Parent/Carer survey asks you to indicate your agreement to your child participating in these sessions and includes a **Parent/Carer Virtual School Agreement** and our Protocol for On-Line Communication, which can be found using this link: <http://www.colmers.bham.sch.uk/wp-content/uploads/Colmers-Virtual-School-Home-School-Agreement-June-2020.pdf>

On-Site Provision for Year 10 from June 15th

In line with Government Guidance, we are planning to extend a face to face offer to Year 10 from June 15th. This offer is designed to help students succeed with their studies from home.

Our top priority is to design an offer that keeps everyone in our community safe, paying close attention to the risks for all of our children, families and staff during the COVID-19 Pandemic. You can find Government Guidance for parents and carers here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers>.

We intend to start carefully with our face-to-face offer because we need to help students return to a very different school environment. The steps we will take are set out below: please note, we are keeping all plans under regular review in light of potential changes to scientific and government advice, so dates may change. Detailed advice and guidance for parents, carers and students will follow by Friday June 12th.

Step 1: Individual Well-Being and Induction Session, week starting June 15th

This will be a 15-minute 1-to-1 session in school to help us understand how your child is doing in themselves, to identify and help with any barriers they may have faced studying from home and to celebrate their successes. The session will also give your child all the information they need about the social distancing measures that will be in place from the following week when Study Support will begin.

Step 2: Weekly 2-Hour Study Support Session, week starting June 22nd

All students will be placed in a fixed group for a weekly 2-hour study support session. The aim is to minimise social mixing in line with Government guidance, keeping your child and therefore your family as safe as possible from risk of transmission during their time at school. Every student will be given a set day in the week and a set time they are expected to attend.

We are limiting the sessions to 2 hours in the first instance while we establish strict social distancing. We know this is going to be a big change for everyone to get used to. By keeping the session to two hours, students will not need to take a break or access the school canteen, meaning that we are keeping to an absolute minimum the opportunities for virus transmission. We will be staggering the start times for students and supporting them with advice for safe travel to and from school.

It is clear that the Government expects all students back in school other than those who are medically vulnerable or living with someone who is shielding. We do know parents and carers may have a number of worries and concerns, however we are confident that the plans we have in place mean that that we are keeping to a minimum the risks of COVID-19 transmission for students attending school.

The survey attached asks you to indicate whether at this stage you expect to send your child into school so that we can plan properly. I appreciate that you may change your view as new information is made available both from school and from Government advisors.

Parent / Carer Forum for Yrs 10 & 12, Thursday June 4th

This is a challenging time for everyone and I imagine you have many questions. You are warmly invited to join me to discuss next steps on Thursday June 4th. This will be an on-line forum using Zoom.

This survey provides you with the opportunity to express interest in joining one of these sessions. Links will be sent out by the end of the day on Wednesday June 3rd.

On-Line Survey – Deadline 12pm Wednesday June 3rd

Please could you complete the on-line survey by **12pm Wednesday June 3rd** :

<https://tinyurl.com/ybtgno3m>

If you are unable to complete the survey on-line, please contact school's Main Reception for assistance and someone will take you through the survey over the phone.

As ever, it is vital we have up-to-date contact details for you, If your phone number or email address have changed, please do contact us as a matter of priority so we can keep in touch with you.

Thank you for your continued support during these most unusual times!

Yours sincerely,



Emma Leaman
Headteacher