



# THE BUCKINGHAM SCHOOL

## A SPECIALIST SPORTS COLLEGE

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Headteacher: Mr A McGinnes

28 May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers of Years 10 and 12

I trust that you and your loved ones are keeping well. This letter is a long one, but its content is very important to you and you will have to make a decision about whether your child will take part in the limited opportunities that we are offering for them to come into school.

Thank you for your prompt and very helpful replies to the survey. According to your responses, we have around 102 Year 10 students and 43 Year 12 students who intend to come to school at the allocated times. We appreciate this may change as the national situation changes, or in response to the publication of our plans. We will be asking you to confirm that your child will be attending on each occasion and to confirm to us that they are symptom-free and have observed the required social distancing rules at all times.

Many of our families have taken this opportunity to express their satisfaction with the current distance learning provision – thank you! The in-school provision will enhance distance learning, not replace it. The distance learning delivery will continue as normal.

We have had to stay on the ball to make our plans. The situation we all face is unprecedented and, inevitably, published guidelines regularly change. The latest announcement, during the Bank Holiday weekend, on the back of over 40 previous updates to the guidance to schools, changed the date that we are able to “interact” with Year 10 and 12 students, to 15<sup>th</sup> June. The wording of the announcement is interesting, as we are now able to “interact” from 15<sup>th</sup> June. This seems watered down from “face to face”, but we believe that, if students can be in school safely, they should be in school. I would like to praise our whole staffing team who, since day one, have regularly “interacted” with Year 10 and Year 12, as well as all our other students.

We will welcome Year 10 and Year 12 students into school on a limited basis, if we remain convinced that it is safe to do so. To be clear, we are satisfied that our own arrangements are stringently safe and place our staff at no more risk than any other citizen returning to work. With this in place, we are committed to the positive impact that these limited opportunities will present to our students to stay connected with their school physically.

We would wish to encourage our students to attend school. However, there are families for whom there are particular concerns. For those parents and carers who are worrying about what they have to do, please be reassured that for now the provision is non-statutory (ie there is no legal requirement for students to attend school), so the choice is purely about what is in the best interests of your child and your family. Please do also note that school uniform will not be required until September (earliest), but we will be stringent about standards of dress.

*The Buckingham School is concerned that every student should have the opportunity to attend school activities/obtain equipment, regardless of their financial circumstances. As such, it may be possible to subsidise those students who would otherwise be unable to attend trips/purchase items. Please feel free to write in confidence to Mrs K Bones at [kbones@buckinghamsschool.org](mailto:kbones@buckinghamsschool.org), if you wish to seek assistance, or obtain more information about Pupil Premium funding.*



**We can only admit students who have observed all of the social distancing rules. From now, your child must continue to follow these if you intend for them to be allowed into school. Students will not be admitted to school unless their parents have confirmed compliance with social distancing and are symptom free, before every attendance.**

**It goes without saying that social distancing and hygiene must be observed whilst at school. Students failing to confirm will be sent home immediately.**

**See our Covid-19 Risk Assessment, available on the school website from next week, after it has been ratified by governors (as will all of these plans).**

Mrs Pykett and Mr Dunckley will write to Year 12 with further information about the educational aspect of the provision and the expectations of students who attend. Likewise, Mr Fox and Mr Dunckley will be writing to Year 10 families.

### **The Provision**

Below is a broad idea of what we are offering, but with a focus on our safety measures.

#### **Year 10 – Provision starts on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> June (North Side) and Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> June (South Side)**

- The proposed provision is that Year 10 students attend on allocated days
- These will be once a fortnight, the rationale being the micro-biology of the incubation and onset of symptoms of Covid-19
- Absence will be chased by the school for pupils who we were expecting, so that we can account for all students, but there is no legal obligation for students to attend school
- We will continue to expect students to engage in their distance learning, even if they do not attend school – we will continue to contact those who are not engaging
- Students will be housed in classes of no more than 9, so they can easily sit an appropriate distance apart
- Students will receive two hours of teaching in one of their GCSE options, plus an hour each of Maths, English and science, and some PE
- Students will remain in the same group all day and will not mix with other groups. They will be taught in the same room all day
- The mobile phone policy will not be relaxed – they are to be switched off and kept in pockets, with no listening to music via headphones

#### **Year 12 – on site provision will start on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> June**

- The proposed provision is that students attend on allocated Fridays
- There will be a whole day of subject teaching in each of the option subjects over the course of the half term
- The larger teaching groups will be split into two groups so that groups do not exceed 9. The exceptions will be taught in a large enough room, to remain 2 metres apart
- Because of the absence of younger students, mobile phones are allowed for research, or playing music through headphones

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## **In General, for both Year 10 and 12 – reassurance of safety**

- Reception will be open to allow for parental contact with the school
- Students are being invited to attend only once every fortnight, to allow any possibility of developing symptoms of Covid-19 to become evident before their next attendance
- Students will be asked to arrive at school at staggered times and their groups will have breaks at staggered times, or in different venues
- Students will be placed in one group for the whole day and these groups will not mix at all, except for our PE provision, which will be outside
- All time will be based in the Jubilee Building and the Queen's Sports Hall. The remainder of indoor areas at school will be out of bounds
- Our dining facilities are too cramped for social distancing – all students will need to bring packed lunches and these will be eaten in their groups
- We have no control over the transport provision and the coach companies will have their own risk assessments in place. We understand that there will be some transport available and we will communicate with you when we know what this will be
- We encourage students to walk or cycle (or be driven) to school and will allow bikes to be stored on the MUGA, locked to the fence
- Year 10 and 12 students will be in school up to three times between 15<sup>th</sup> June and the summer break. The current distance learning provision will continue throughout for these students - their visits to school will enhance, not replace this.
- We expect 100% of our students to engage with online provision, even if they are not able to attend school
- We respect that, currently, the most at risk adults and children should stay away from school. As such, certain students and certain staff will not attend school

## **Trained and Senior Personnel, Standards**

- At least the head teacher and one of the deputy head teachers will be present on site when the school is open
- The highest standards of behaviour and conduct will be expected and, for the safety of all, students who do not meet these standards will not be allowed in school
- At least one designated safeguarding lead and one member of the Student First Team will be on site when the school is open
- There will be medically trained personnel on site

## **Medical**

- The only PPE we will supply (other than hand sanitiser) will be for staff dealing with medical emergencies involving suspected cases
- There will be a designated isolation sick bay, for any suspected cases of Covid-19, that become evident during the day
- The medical room where, for example, students go to have their prescribed medicines administered, or be treated for other medical issues, will run as normal
- It should be obvious that students with symptoms, or from households where there is a known case or self-isolation is taking place, should not come into school
- We only have the facility to check the temperature of students who we suspect are unwell

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## Cleanliness/Hygiene

- The school has already been deep cleaned and toilets and showers have been further steam cleaned by an external contractor. Rooms and toilets in use by students will be regularly cleaned
- Hand sanitiser will be available, students are urged to carry their own personal supply – students will be required to apply at certain times, including as they arrive. We are fitting extra dispensers around the school and every classroom will have its own supply
- Use of toilets will be supervised more closely than normal
- Students will not share resources, nor be allowed to share each other's equipment
- We are currently in the middle of taking the opportunity to work on site enhancements, at a cost of around £100,000. This includes over £40,000 on flooring and over £10,000 on deep cleaning of toilets and showers. Every classroom in the Jubilee will have a new carpet and the corridors will be laid with a hard-wearing covering. The building will have a one-way system and two metre distances marked on the floors
- Classrooms will be wiped down with disinfectant wipes at the end of every day, as will all other contact surfaces in the building
- Additional cleaning will take place as required

If you have any questions about the safety aspects of the provision, please use the email address [closurefaq@buckinghamschool.org](mailto:closurefaq@buckinghamschool.org). Some replies will be personalised, recurring themes will be replied to the whole community. Please note further explanation of the educational aspect and expectations of students will follow next week, as outlined above.

These arrangements are a significant burden on the school's staff. They are willingly agreeing to continue to work full time, providing distance learning, whilst additionally offering these face to face opportunities to our students. Our staff take on a huge responsibility in their commitment to support your child(ren). As head teacher, I take ultimate responsibility in law, as ever, for the safety of all. My staff and I do so willingly, because we are as committed as ever to our "student first" ethos. We will be forever proud to be part of this community's school.

Stay safe and in good health.

With my very best wishes



### **Mr A McGinnes**

Headteacher

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#wearebuckinghamschool  
#proudtobebuckingham  
#buckingham

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