

B.A.S.H.

Buckinghamshire Association of Secondary Headteachers

20th May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Buckinghamshire Association of Secondary Headteachers is a professional organisation that comprises the Headteachers of all secondary schools in Buckinghamshire. We are formed around an Executive Board that coordinates our agendas and discussions. Our Executive Board meets with the Primary Executive Board as part of our overall working process. This means that the Buckinghamshire Association of Secondary Headteachers and the Primary Executive Board work collaboratively as the two significant Educational Professional bodies across Buckinghamshire.

On Friday 15th of May the Buckinghamshire Association of Secondary Headteachers met as scheduled and one of our key agenda items was the potential for the reopening of schools for years 10 and 12 from the 1st of June. In advance of our meeting the Executive conducted a survey with Headteachers to assess their thinking on how to progress with the Government's idea to provide Face to Face opportunities for pupils in these two year groups before the end of the academic year. We discussed this topic at length as a group and we also drew heavily on the current advice from professional organisations, such as the Association of School and College Leaders.

However it is important to note that the current situation around schools and COVID19 remains very fluid and we anticipate additional guidelines from the Department for Education soon. It is possible that schools will have to make different decisions as the Government updates its information and guidance. We recommend staying up to date with your child's school communication in relation to any changes that may occur at a national level.

As an association we recognise that Headteachers can decide how to proceed with the potential reopening of schools. Some members have decided not to open until September 2020 and others would like to invite specific year groups into school, subject to the transport arrangements available. However as a group we have discussed and agreed that for some schools the concept of Face to Face opportunities does not translate into the full reopening of secondary schools for years 10 and 12 in the next half term.

We are concerned that the reopening of secondary schools for years 10 and 12 could interfere with the ongoing online learning provision for other secondary age

pupils. This could be due to the amount of staff required to support the social distancing requirements in some Buckinghamshire schools at this time. We are also very aware that parental preferences at this time are heavily influenced by concerns around COVID19. There will be significant restrictions on school transport and public transport in the county at the moment. For those reasons, school leaders are committed to ensuring pupils are supported right through to the end of the academic year. However, as a group we all recognise that this situation is fluid and schools may change the initial approach as the summer term progresses.

As a group we have agreed that Face to Face opportunities for years 10 and 12 translates to the following headlines:

- Buckinghamshire Secondary Schools will respond differently to the issues of reopening for years 10 and 12 in early June.
- Buckinghamshire Secondary Schools are committed to identifying opportunities to provide Face to Face opportunities for year 10 and 12 pupils. Each school will make the most appropriate decision for their own pupils to support them in being September ready.
- Buckinghamshire Secondary schools may invite specific pupils to attend school either for continuous attendance or to support learning that cannot be addressed through remote learning
- All Buckinghamshire Secondary Schools are committed to ensuring the online learning provision that they are providing is fulfilled to the highest quality possible for each school.
- Buckinghamshire Secondary Schools are still committed to supporting the children of Key Workers and Vulnerable Children at this time.

We recognise that all of the secondary schools in Buckinghamshire are different. We serve both urban and rural settings, have local catchments and in the case of many, very wide catchments with large numbers of pupils attending from outside of Buckinghamshire. As such, all of our schools whether maintained, Academy, Grammar or Faith schools have agreed to work towards supporting pupils in the safest and most appropriate way possible.

We have informed the Service Director for Education at Buckinghamshire Council and have worked collaboratively with them on a School Transport survey which will be circulated with primary and special school parents in the first instance. This is because of the specialist transport requirements for these two groups. A secondary specific survey will be circulated to parents later in the summer term.

All of the secondary Headteachers are eager to return to school and to create a normal environment for our pupils. However, in these uncertain times we do not want to unnecessarily add to the anxieties of pupils and parents. We also want to ensure that any additional support for years 10 and 12 does not inadvertently disadvantage pupils in years 7,8 and 9. Schools are making significant efforts to support pupils working at home at this time. We know it is not a normal situation and it is our intention to support parents and pupils.

We would like to wish you and your families the very best at this time. We all hope that you are safe and well. Please remember to reach out to your schools' pastoral teams to raise any issues we may be able to help with. We know that returning to

school will bring a significant number of issues that simply were not present in March when we closed. Parents and schools working in cooperation is going to be a key part of the recovery curriculum for all children in Buckinghamshire.

Yours sincerely

The Buckinghamshire Association of Secondary Headteachers, Executive Board.