



SJB/JRu  
21 May 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

I am writing to you to let you know of our plans for how we will begin the gradual process of opening the school up for more face to face contact from 2nd June 2020. As you know, the Government has given us an initial focus on certain students in Y10 and Y12, and so this letter is particularly relevant to those parents/carers. As you can guess, we would love to be able to have everyone back in school, but that isn't possible at the moment. Please bear with us whilst we roll out this plan with the hope of having more students in when we have been given the guidance to do so. This has been a tough time, but we have stayed together as a community and we can see out this next phase.

### **Our aim:**

To arrange for a gradual (and safe) increase in 'face to face contact' with teachers for those Y10 students with EHCPs, Looked After Children and those who we have information on to suggest they either cannot log on and access the online lessons, or those we know are not 'keeping up'. This will be a small number to start with so that we can get used to having more students and staff on the site and to ensure that we all comply with social distancing and safety. Mrs Balmer will be contacting the Y12 students/parents/carers to give the exact start dates and details of their phased return.

It is vital to stress that 'face to face contact' is not the same as normal teaching and having these sessions in place does not mean that school will now be open to all students. When we do return to 'normal' please rest assured that we will be targeting students to help them rapidly recover any lost learning. This will be a discussion for the future and so for now, any child who is managing to log on and access the work from home, will need to continue to do that, and I thank you once again for your continued support of our remote learning curriculum.

Parents/carers on the initial target group are being contacted today to see if they wish their son/daughter to be in school. As a school, we are doing all that we can to keep everyone safe, but we completely respect the decision of a parent/carer to not send their daughter/son into school at this time. We are happy that our remote learning package continues to provide an effective timetable of lessons and keeps your family safe.

### **The phases:**

We have split the next half term into two phases. Phase 1 will be from Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> June (assuming the Government still goes ahead with their plans) to 26<sup>th</sup> June.

To start with, we will have these face to face days on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. This small control group, and staggering of days, allows us to get to know how we need to manage the site for the hopeful return of more students in the future.

Phase 2 is 29<sup>th</sup> June to 17<sup>th</sup> July and we will update you nearer the time on what that will look like (hoping that the evidence from the Government allows us to continue to roll out these plans).

### **The School Day:**

The Y10 students will be following the normal COVID timetable that has been in place since March.

The school day will run with the same timings as the COVID timetable that we are currently operating on (50 minute lessons and the same breaks).

2.

We will operate a form of RFL at the start of the day from 8.50 - 9.10 and this will be led by the member of the Leadership Group on duty that day. This RFL session will allow us to reinforce key messages on safety and how we use the site. It will also allow us to take orders for lunch for any of our students who are in receipt of Free School Meals.

### **Location of the 'lessons'**

The Y10 students will all be based in the Maths Block (classroom to be confirmed) and they will use this classroom for every lesson they are in school. Normally the students move around school to the teachers, but for this we will be moving teachers to the students.

Students will sit at the same desk in every lesson they have and they will be expected to adhere to strict social distancing rules. We will be reinforcing these in every lesson, so that the students understand them and are not anxious about them.

We have chosen the Maths Block because:

- Classrooms are large enough for us to manage the space and fit the students in
- The Maths Block has stairs that we can operate a one-way system with
- There are unisex toilets that allow students to maintain social distancing and can be cleaned
- It is a modern building and is easy to clean
- The handwashing basin is a long trough that means we can manage social distancing
- Other staff are on hand in Finance/ICT should they be needed
- A disabled toilet is available in case of an emergency
- There is a strong Wi-Fi signal so that online learning can still take place
- Windows and doors can be open to allow for good ventilation
- First Aid trained staff will be available each day

### **Break and Lunch:**

The students will be allowed to use the tennis courts for break and lunch. This will be supervised by staff. The tennis nets will be up, should the students want to play tennis, but we will obviously have to clean any equipment that is used.

In nice weather, students will be encouraged to be outside and we may decide to add the 'daily mile' into the lunch/break and staff who supervise will ensure this is done whilst adhering to social distancing.

Unless students have Free School Meals, they will be asked to bring their own lunch and we will have bins available to dispose of any packaging. All eating will take place in the classroom and these rooms will be left very tidy before being cleaned each day.

Students must bring their own water bottle from home and will be assigned a space to fill their bottles safely. They are also encouraged to bring a snack.

### **What will these face to face sessions look like?**

As we have acknowledged that our phase 1 students will, for a variety of reasons, require extra support (whilst maintaining social distancing), we will be trialling each lesson having an 'expert' in front of the class. That expert will be a teacher and, where possible, that teacher will be a member of the department teaching that lesson. This will not be as easy to do with Option lessons so the students may have a teacher who does not normally teach them at that time.

There will be a Teaching Assistant or Support Staff member available (again following social distancing).

3.

The lessons being taught on our phase 1 days are:

Tuesday - Maths, Option C, English, Option D

Thursday - Science, PE, Option B, Option A

Friday - Maths, English, Science, Option D

The teacher will, of course, be starting their own lesson off and the Teaching Assistant (TA) can support the students in school to start their online learning. Once ready, the teacher and TA will work as a team to ensure that there is in-class support for the students in the classroom (as well as maintaining support for those online at home).

**What do students bring?**

We are asking that the students bring their Chromebook/laptop with them as they will be used to using these and it minimises any touching of other equipment.

We will have basic stationary available for students on each desk that will be in clear pencil cases and these will be regularly cleaned.

**Uniform:**

We will not be expecting the students to come into school in their uniform as we recognise that we would be asking you to wash your child's clothes after they have attended school each day. We hope you understand that we are trying to help the students get used to changing into different clothes following what for some will be the first mixing they have had for some time. This brings their actions in line with the advice for the general public if they are mixing with others.

**Transport:**

As there will not be a bus service, our phase 1 students will be coming to school by car. Drop off and collection will be in the school car park and parents/carers must not leave their vehicles unless they have contacted the school office to arrange a visit.

**Hygiene and routines**

We are in the process of putting signage up around school to remind students and staff about social distancing and hygiene. We will have instructions for staff and students to maintain effective social distancing, but I do need to say that we cannot promise that the students will get this right every time.

Cleaners will be around each day and they will clean classrooms over break and lunch (a light clean of handles, desks etc...)

Students must wash their hands if they leave the room at any time. This includes a visit to the toilet, break or lunchtime.

**Safety:**

You will have read the information on PPE in schools. We have face masks and face shields should there be a need to administer any first aid with a child who has symptoms. Students are not required to wear face masks to school and any student who is displaying any symptoms must be kept home and the school must be informed so that testing can be arranged. If a student displays any symptoms in school, they will be supported in line with the Government guidance and parents/carers will be contacted to collect them.

Further discussions will take place regarding testing and the need for a period of isolation in line with guidance. This will affect the family as well as the student and will also have a knock-on effect for any student or staff member who has been in class with that student.

4.

We have been developing our detailed risk assessment and I am sure you can appreciate that this has been changing on an almost daily basis. We will share the most up to date risk assessment on the school website over half term.

**Changes:**

There will be updates as we go and I will let you know as soon as they appear. As you can appreciate, this is not something we have had to plan for before. As I said above, we would love to see you all again, but we have to get this right and we have to keep our community safe, just as we have been doing since March.

Please remember that this plan is in readiness for the 2<sup>nd</sup> June. I will, of course, let you know if this is NOT going to happen. In the meantime, let's plan to assume it will be happening.

**The long term picture:**

Our hope is that the infection and death rate continues to fall and that we can start to open the school up to more students. As you will be aware, we do not yet have the scientific evidence to be able to do that, but we will continue to keep you in the loop on that situation over time.

If your daughter/son is not one of the students in Y10 we select, or they are in a different year group then please continue to get them online and in their remote lessons. We know it is no substitute for being in school but the staff are continuing to develop lessons for your daughter/son and more of them are trying innovative methods of engaging learning online.

This offer does not change our continued commitment to supporting the learning and welfare of everyone in our community. We continue to be here for you if you need us and I urge you to stay in touch as you have been doing.

Thank you again for your continued support of Dene Magna. I hope you can see how we are trying to balance a desire to get students back into school with a need to ensure that those in school can be kept safe. If we manage this, we will continue to be doing our part in getting this horrible virus under control and, as said, I will continue to update you when more information is available.

Stay safe and stay positive, we are getting there slowly!

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steve Brady', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Steve Brady  
Headteacher