

15 July 2020

Dear Parents, Carers and Students,

I hope you are all safe and healthy. Thank you for your patience whilst we prepared the arrangements for opening the college in September 2020.

The DfE has published their expectations of secondary schools. We are to be fully open to all students and provide a broad and balanced curriculum.

We are very much looking forward to welcoming all of our students back to college and we have missed teaching them all daily. This letter and the accompanying booklet outlines all the information that you will need about the return to college.

We have carefully planned for and put in place all the Government guidance for full opening in September 2020. At the time of writing this letter, here is the most up-to-date link for you to refer to:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

Staggered start and finish times have been established in order to minimise contact and the risk of infection. It is important that students arrive to school on time, as we do have allocated drop-off times. Parent/Carers this does mean you need to make sure you drop off and collect your child/children on time; failure to do this will result in the mixing of our year groups and this puts us all at risk. In anticipation, we thank you for your support with this.

Students have been allocated to a specific zone. Students will spend the majority of their lessons in the same classroom and only travel to lessons that require specialist facilities e.g. PE. We have reduced the number of individual journeys between classrooms children make by 75% through by changing where students are taught. Rearranging students into year group zones has also enabled us to stick with the college's planned timetable and made sure we can teach our usual curriculum.

We all find ourselves now adapting to life with COVID-19, the unusual norm! As we are living with the virus, safety comes first. Students are required to follow all the safety guidance outlined in our booklet and in the home/school agreement. Our usual behaviour policy and procedures remain in place but aspects of our home-school agreement and classroom expectations have had to be modified to reflect this new post-Covid world. If a pupil behaves in a way that puts others at risk, we will contact their parents/carers to collect their child immediately and the sanction will be an exclusion. Any students who have to be collected for such behaviour and excluded will have a reintegration meeting with a senior leader, their parents/carers before their return to college so we can be sure that they will not put others at risk. We must adhere to all the safety guidance and we cannot take any risks in the best interests of protecting everyone in our school and wider community.

Before students return to college, parents and carers, please send in your signed home/school agreement and the Acceptable User Policy (AUP) which will confirm that you agree to up-hold the agreement and policy. You will receive this via parentmail. If you do not have email, please telephone studentservices@astreacottenham.org. Please return these documents by 9am on Wednesday 2nd September 2020. Please also inform Student Services if there are any changes to contact details or medical needs.

Please do take the time to read the guidance in detail, particularly the sections around safety. Any child displaying COVID-19 symptoms must be kept at home to self-isolate. Any incidents of COVID-19 infection within households must be reported to school immediately.

If your child shows symptoms of COVID-19 whilst in school, they will be isolated in the designated medical room and we will contact you. You will be required to come and collect your child immediately, get them tested and notify us of the test result straight away. If a positive test result is given, then this does mean we will need to close the zone or school to the group of students and staff who attended on that day. We will of course liaise with the relevant authorities before making this decision. In the event of a COVID-19 case the national guidance for self-isolation must be followed. Please note that parents/carers are not allowed on college site.

Please note that the school learning day will start at 8.45am and students will start lessons at this time. The college day will finish at 3.05pm with a staggered finish to avoid students mixing. An extra-curricular offer will be organised in early September but please note this is likely to be reduced from our usual offer, as we cannot mix year groups. We will be able to provide online learning for students. On-line provision might be necessary because:

- A student is clinically vulnerable and has been advised by a doctor not to attend school;
- A student has had to self-isolate;
- Our area might go into localised lockdown;
- The school has a case of COVID-19.

Teams will be the on-line learning platform used by students and staff. Alternative arrangements will be put in place if students have no access to Teams. Please read this section of the booklet.

We have made some changes to the first week of September to ensure that we can train all staff fully for a safe return to school and to ensure that all our new arrangements to keep everyone safe run as smoothly as possible. The first week of September is outlined below:

- Tuesday 1st September – Training Day
- Wednesday 2nd September – Training Day
- Thursday 3rd and Friday 4th September – Induction programme for Years 7 and 11 only
- Monday 7th September – All year groups return to school. This will be the first day for Years 8, 9 and 10.

A date for your diary is Monday 30th November 2020 which is a half-day to provide further training for staff, arrangements will be sent to you in plenty of time.

May I take this opportunity to reassure you that we are on hand to support all of our students at this challenging time. The return to the college may be a daunting one, but we have planned this very rigorously to ensure that, when students and staff do come on site, they will be safe, and their learning experience will be a positive one.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter and the booklet; we look forward to welcoming all year groups back to College in September 2020.

Have a safe and relaxing summer break.

With very best wishes,



Helen Cassady
Principal