



Hanley Castle High School

and Sixth Form Centre

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Headteacher: Mrs Lindsey Cooke

20 May 2020

Dear Year 10 Parent

I hope that this letter finds you and your families safe and well.

You will be aware of the debate which is currently taking place in the media regarding welcoming more students back to school after half term. This applies particularly to those children of primary age, but there has also been discussion about students from Years 10 and 12.

Hanley Castle is in agreement with the Government that it is in students' best interests to return to school **as soon as it is safe to do so**. All HUET schools have been planning for this for some time, and Hanley Castle has a phased plan which involves both Year 10 and Year 12, perhaps commencing around mid-June.

Hanley Castle will, of course, continue its in-school provision for the children of key workers and vulnerable children, as well as providing on-line work for students at home. However, we also agree with the Government that any expansion of this provision must be dependent on further progress towards meeting the Government's five tests:

- 1. That the NHS has the capacity to provide critical care right across the UK**
- 2. That there is a sustained and consistent fall in daily death rates from coronavirus**
- 3. That the rate of infection has decreased to manageable levels**
- 4. That operational challenges including testing and PPE are in hand with supply able to meet future demand**
- 5. That any adjustments to the current measures will not risk a second peak in infections that would overwhelm the NHS**

Obviously, it is not possible to predict how much progress will have been made in terms of each test by early June, which is still some time away. The situation is changing daily, and there is currently much uncertainty about the actual level of transmission of the coronavirus, how much this varies regionally, and whether the recent relaxation in lockdown regulations will lead to a rise in cases, or even to a second wave. In addition, testing arrangements are not yet providing prompt results, whilst a 'test and trace' system has yet to be rolled out. The Government will review the latest science on 28th May before issuing its assessment of the national situation.

For all of these reasons, Hanley Castle will wait until 1st June before deciding locally whether we should begin to implement our plans to expand our provision. At this point the decision might be to go ahead with these plans, or to postpone a decision to allow for a further improvement in the situation. We will, of course, keep parents informed. I am sure that you will understand that this cautious and sensible approach is designed not only to protect children and staff, but also to protect the households to which they will return each day, many of which include vulnerable members.

If, on the 1st June, the situation has improved significantly, it is our intention to run a trial week where each Year 10 student would be invited to attend school for one full morning of English and maths teaching. At the very earliest, this would be during the week commencing 8th June.



This four-hour session would allow students to receive training in safer working and social distancing in school, as well as review work completed at home and plan the next steps in their learning. It would also give our pastoral team an opportunity to make face-to-face contact after what has been a long break.

Each child will be contacted individually with information regarding the date and times on which they should attend, as well as their allocated group number.

In practice, this will mean that a maximum of 48 Year 10 students and around 10 members of staff will be in school at any one time. Group sizes will be 8 students or fewer, with each group based in one classroom, in order to allow maximum social distancing and minimise risks.

I have included below some of the guidance we will be issuing should conditions allow us to implement our plan:

Travel and equipment

- Where at all possible, it is safest that students are brought to school by car for an 8.45 am start and collected from the school field at 1.20 pm
- Students should be in school uniform
- They will need to bring with them a drink and a snack for breaktime
- They may wear a surgical mask – scarves and bike masks / helmets will not be allowed
- They may bring with them alcohol hand sanitiser if available
- They must bring their English and maths books, along with the work they have completed in these subjects at home

Arrangements in school

- All students should report to a member of staff on the bus bay (maintaining 2m distance from both staff and other students) as soon as they arrive on the school site
- The member of staff will allocate them to a teaching room, depending on their group
- Students should proceed to that classroom immediately, where they will be allocated their own desk
- Students will remain in that room for extended sessions of English and maths before and after breaktime
- Breaktimes will be staggered to minimise contact with other students
- In fair weather break will be spent on the field; if it rains, students will remain in their allocated classroom
- Work will continue to be set in other subjects for completion at home during the rest of the week

Important

- **Students must not return to school if they have an underlying medical condition which places them in the 'Highest Risk' category according to Government guidelines (please check on the gov.uk website)**
- **Students must not be sent to school if they are unwell in any way**
- **Students will not be admitted to school unless they agree to comply fully with the Covid Code of Conduct (see below) – a signed copy must be brought to school and handed to a senior member of staff on arrival**

The effectiveness of these arrangements will be reviewed at the end of the trial week. If successful, it is expected that the same arrangements for Year 10 will be duplicated the following week.

The school to which students return will not be the same as the one they left in March. Our routines and expectations are now very different, and a more detailed Covid Code of Conduct (CCC) will be sent to you separately when the time comes.

The in-school sessions will commence with a briefing on this CCC, but it will be vital that it is read and discussed by both parents and children before Year 10 return to school.



I do hope that the news this letter contains is welcome, and that you feel reassured by the cautious approach the school is taking. An immense amount of thought and care is going into determining when and how our students return to school, and the safety of students, staff and their households remains our top concern.

I will contact you again after our meeting on 1st June when the situation will be clearer. In the meantime, my very best wishes to you all.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "L. Cooke". A long, thin horizontal line is drawn below the signature, extending to the right.

Lindsey Cooke
Headteacher

