

LANCASTER ROYAL GRAMMAR SCHOOL

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10th June 2020

Dear Parents,

School closure and future re-opening

I am writing to update you about school closure and future re-opening.

We are planning for return to a type of normality in September, although it is too early to know what restrictions may be in place then.

Remote teaching through Microsoft Teams will continue to be the main way that we teach all year groups this term. Teachers are delivering on average 50% of their lessons “live” and online, with work set alongside for each subject in the Assignments area. Please also encourage your son to read as much as possible, whether fact or fiction. 20 minutes per day makes all the difference!

Government guidance

There is now no realistic prospect of pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9 returning to lessons in school this term, except as part of our key worker provision.

Schools in Lancashire may be allowed to begin to provide some limited face-to-face support for pupils in Year 10 and the Lower Sixth from Monday 22nd June. This will be not be a return to full lessons; only a quarter (25%) of those year groups are allowed in school at any one time.

Boarding

The Department for Education and the Boarding Schools Association are developing helpful guidance about the re-opening of boarding schools. A boarding house or individual building is considered as a “household” in terms of public health. There are still a number of significant unknowns – such as how to manage quarantine for pupils travelling from overseas, and appropriate occupancy levels of different areas. We will be in regular contact with boarding families as plans become clearer.

We are working towards the quality assurance recommendations of the BSA’s Covid Safe Charter as we plan for the re-opening of all our boarding houses in September. The charter can be seen here:

<https://www.boarding.org.uk/userfiles/bsa/Covid%20documents/Covid%20Safe%20Charter.pdf>

Pupils currently in school

The school has been open for children of keyworkers ever since school closure on 20th March, and for children requiring particular support. Some pupils from all year groups are in school every day. We would like those pupils to continue to work in school, and we can add other critical workers’ children to that group.

This has given us an opportunity to establish new hygiene and distancing routines. These range from advice notices, distancing points and hand sanitation stations, to new protocols for everything from First Aid and PPE to break time activities and games.

Looking ahead

We hope and expect that school will be able to re-open as fully as possible in the first week of September. We may well extend the start of year induction for new pupils by a day or two, and therefore phase the start of term slightly for all pupils.

We are working out contingency plans for other scenarios. We have given considerable thought to measures such as one-way systems, use of outside space, and options to stagger lunch times to reduce pupil congestion – amongst others.

We are following closely the emerging advice to schools about wider areas including sport and music. Our commitment to give pupils an exceptional range of opportunities outside the classroom will not change. However, we expect some of those activities to be modified for a while. We have been very pleased with the way that so many pupils have engaged with remote learning. It is immensely impressive to see what our pupils and teachers have achieved. With huge thanks for your ongoing support for the school, and all best wishes,

Yours faithfully,

Dr C J Pyle
Headmaster