



HAMPSTEAD SCHOOL

Learning together Achieving together

21 May 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

Firstly, as always, I hope this finds you safe and well.

I wrote to you a week ago about the government announcement suggesting some wider opening of schools from 1 June at the earliest. In that letter, I suggested that I would be able to give you more information during this week, pending further published guidance from the Department for Education (DfE).

The DfE's ambition was stated as:

We expect that secondary schools and colleges will be able to offer some face to face contact with year 10 and year 12 pupils. This will not be a return to full timetables or pupils back in school or college full time, rather some support to supplement pupils' remote education. In line with implementing protective measures and reducing contacts, schools and colleges should limit the attendance of the year 10 and 12 cohort in the setting at any one time and to keep students in small groups.

Since then, as I am sure you are aware, there has been considerable "media noise" about this ambition. This has, frankly, been unhelpful. At Hampstead School we have been working hard to facilitate some wider opening, as we felt this to be in the best interests of our Year 10 and Year 12 students. However, as I wrote last week, we would only ever open at the point that it was safe to do so for students and staff, in accordance with the published DfE guidance and in agreement with the LA, Camden and Islington Public Health and Professional Associations.

The DfE was due to publish its guidance on the wider reopening of secondary schools last Monday 18 May. To date, this has not been published. Consequently, without this guidance informing due diligence, I am frustrated that I have not been able to consult nor comprehensively risk assess for any wider reopening from 1 June.

The half-term break is imminent and therefore, from 1 June Hampstead School **will not** be opening more widely for students in any year group. We will continue with current supportive in school provision for the children of key workers and other priority students.



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Once I have received further DfE advice, I shall inform you as to whether we can, hopefully, make some provision for Years 10 and 12 from w/b 8 June. I must stress that even then, the time frame for any gradual return to school is uncertain. There is considerable complexity around planning for any wider reopening and everything from transport to cleaning, test-track-and-trace, and day to day working procedures must be thoroughly thought through and risk assessed.

It continues to remain unlikely that Key Stage 3 students will be able to return to school this side of the summer holiday. We are actively exploring ways in which we can further deepen, enrich and expand our remote learning for our Key Stage 3 students.

Finally, as the half-term break is upon us, Study Leave officially starts for our Year 11, Year 13 and Year 12 (Level 2) students. Teachers have been spending huge amounts of time in grading meetings ensuring the accuracy and validity of the grades that we are submitting in lieu of terminal examinations. However, I am acutely aware that the important rites of passage associated with the end of Years 11 and 13 are absent. I am saddened by this, but will be exploring whether some means of closure can be achieved another way.

Enjoy the half-term break; please look after yourself and your loved ones.

Jacques Szemalikowski
Head



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