

Dear parents and carers of Year 10 students

Re: wider opening of schools for Year 10 students

Firstly, I'd like to thank you for your patience on this particular issue. As you are probably aware, there have been a lot of changes to government guidance over the past few weeks and this has made it very difficult for us to communicate with you in a clear and timely manner. I should say that I am not seeking to make a political point here (I recognise the challenges the government faces too) but simply saying that I sympathise with those of you who are eager for some clarity.

This letter sets out the situation as it currently stands. I would be grateful if you could read it carefully and then complete a short survey (link towards end of letter) to help us finalise our plans. I will then write again next week with the finer details, including which days students will be able to attend school.

Expectations from government

In addition to maintaining the full-time provision for vulnerable children and those of keyworkers that we have been doing ever since the lockdown began, the government is now asking secondary schools to do the following from 15th June:

“provide some face-to-face support to supplement the remote education of Year 10 and Year 12 pupils, with a clear expectation that remote education will continue to be the predominant form of education delivery for these year groups”

There is plenty more detailed [guidance](#), but the other key points to draw attention to here are that we must ensure only a maximum of a quarter of these year groups are in school at any one time and that schools have been given some flexibility about which students to prioritise for support.

With this in mind, we have drawn up a plan that we think best meets the needs of as many of our students as possible, but also remains firmly within the spirit and letter of the government guidelines.

Principles

The basic principles behind our plan are:

1. Always follow government guidelines
2. Give all Year 10 students the opportunity to attend school this term so that they can start getting back into the right habits and can receive encouragement and support from staff in school
3. Provide additional support for students with special educational needs and some of those who tend to find school more challenging than most

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4. Continue to develop our online learning programme for all students (bearing in mind that the more teachers we have delivering lessons in school, the fewer online lessons we can deliver for students in all year groups)
5. Respect the right of parents/carers to choose whether or not to send children into school for the remainder of this term, with no pressure either way from us
6. Do all of this as safely as we reasonably can, including having all risk assessments quality assured by Warrington Borough Council.

Outline of plans

From 15th June, all Year 10 students will be able to attend school once a week until the end of term. We will confirm which day for which children once we have analysed your response to the survey; this will be towards the end of next week.

In addition, we will shortly be contacting parents and carers of some of those students who tend to find schoolwork a little more challenging than most. We will be offering you the opportunity to attend school more regularly, with support available to supplement the online lessons.

When students are in school, we will be operating on this basis:

- The school day will run from 8.20am until 12.15pm, leaving time for students to get home and eat lunch in time for their afternoon online lesson.
- There will be no lunchtime because of the additional challenges of ensuring social distancing at meal times. Students will have the opportunity to order a snack for breaktime (likely to be toast or equivalent) and this will be delivered to classrooms.
- Each day will involve a lesson in English, Maths and Science with subject specialist teachers. Pastoral/well-being support will also be available.
- These lessons will supplement the online learning timetable that was launched this week. Online lessons in English Maths and Science all take place on the mornings of Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, which means that no changes will be needed to the online timetable.
- Students will be allocated to 'pods' made up of a maximum of around 40 students and a small team of teachers. These pods will not come into contact with one another and will be located in different parts of the building, using different entrances and different toilets.
- Each pod will then be split into smaller classes, with a maximum class size of 12 to allow for seating 2 metres apart from one another. Excess furniture will be removed from rooms to make distancing even easier.
- Students will remain in the same class all day, to minimise 'mixing'. Instead, teachers within each pod will move between classes to ensure specialist teaching.
- At break times students will stay within their class groups and will be supervised to ensure they maintain social distancing.
- Additional handwashing stations have been ordered. Students will be supervised washing their hands before entering the building and at other times throughout the day, and signs will be up to remind them of the importance of hand hygiene.
- Toilets will be supervised to ensure social distancing is maintained.
- An enhanced cleaning operation will be in place, with all classrooms being cleaned at least once a day and toilets, door handles, and other 'high use' surfaces being disinfected more frequently. Hand sanitiser and disinfectant wipes will be readily available throughout school, as will tissues and pedal bins.

- Students will be expected to wear normal school uniform if they are only attending one day a week. Those who are in the groups attending more often will not have to wear uniform (so that they can wash clothes at the end of each day and minimise the risks of spreading the virus).
- We ask parents and carers to keep an eye out for any symptoms of Covid-19 and not to send your child into school if there is any doubt. It is essential everybody follows the [government guidance](#) on this.

Transport

The government has asked that people avoid public transport and we ask that you respect this where possible.

Warrington's Own Buses will run Lymm High services from 15th June. This is a slightly slimmed down service in lieu of the much smaller numbers than usual. The details are as follows:

- In the morning, the following buses will run: 40, 40B, 41 and 42A
- In the afternoon, the following will run: 39, 40, 40B, 41
- [Click here](#) for a full timetable.
- If you are intending on sending your child into school by bus, please make sure you read the [Covid-19 travel guidance](#) from Warrington's Own Buses. This includes a request to wear face masks on the bus and to take various other measures to ensure social distancing.
- Warrington's Own Buses have also assured us that they are taking all reasonable steps to ensure safety in the current circumstances. For example:
 - Additional cleaning of buses throughout the day and evening
 - Treating vehicle interiors with an anti-viral fog cleaning device
 - Installation of Airbubbl filtration units to remove virus particles, bacteria and pollutants from the air
 - Social distancing precautions throughout, including taking no more than 25% of the usual number of passengers on any one bus
- We will also have staff supervising students getting on and off buses to help ensure the correct social distancing.

Survey

Having read the above, we would be very grateful if you could complete our [brief survey by 9am on Monday morning](#). This will really help us to finalise the details of our plan as well as giving you an opportunity to raise any questions or concerns. When I write again next week, I will address any frequently asked questions that come up in the survey.

Conclusion

It is our responsibility to balance the health and safety of staff and students with the need to start providing face-to-face education as soon as possible. We believe the plan outlined above achieves a sensible balance. However, we respect the fact that everyone will have their own opinions on the relative risks and rewards; some may feel that we should be providing *more* face-to-face time for more students, whereas others may feel that it is unnecessary to be doing as much as we are.

For those of you who are especially worried about the health and safety aspects, please rest assured that we will do all we can to enforce social distancing and proper hygiene measures. For the most part, this ought to be achievable in a secondary school like ours, although I am sure you will understand that it is impossible to

guarantee at all times in any school setting. It is also important to stress that we will not be putting any pressure on you to send your child into school this term if you decide that it is not a risk worth taking.

For those of you who are more inclined to think that school should be open more often and/or for longer, we simply ask for your understanding that it is not our place to make decisions that would mean we are offering more than the government has asked us to. With a limit of a quarter of Year 10 students being in at any one time and the need to avoid mixing of groups of students or staff wherever possible, we don't have a great deal of room for manoeuvre.

Either way, I am sure we can all agree that we are looking forward to the time when we can welcome all students back to school safely. In the meantime, very best wishes to all of you and please do raise any questions or concerns via the [survey](#).

Kind regards

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

Gwyn Williams