

Dear parents and carers of Year 12 students

Re: wider opening of schools for Year 10 and 12 students

Firstly, I'd like to thank you for your patience on this particular issue. As you are probably aware, there has been a lot of speculation and a lot of changes to government guidance over the past few weeks, which 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 government faces too) but simply that I sympathise with families who are eager for some clarity.

This letter sets out the situation as it currently stands and I would be grateful if you could read it carefully. Once you have done so, there is a survey that we would like some of you to complete and, once we have analysed the results from this, I will write again next week with final details.

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 Year 12 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. Provide additional face-to-face support for students with special educational needs and for those who are in particular need of pastoral/well-being support
3. 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

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4. 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
5. Do all of this as safely as we reasonably can, including having all risk assessments quality assured by Warrington Borough Council and noting the government guidance to minimise 'mixing' of groups of students

Outline of plans

Our plan involves three different groups of students:

1. The majority of Year 12 students will follow a purely online programme of live lessons. We anticipate being able to supplement this further in many subjects with the opportunity to contact subject specialists at other times in the week as well, for help with home learning. Students are also free to contact their own class teachers if they feel they would benefit from a general conversation.
2. Students in Fashion, Art and BTEC Sport will be invited into school in order to work on coursework – in recognition of the fact that this cannot be done at home. (N.b. for other practical subjects such as DT or PE, students will focus on the theory units during online lessons for the remainder of this term). We will be in touch with these students separately about the details of this provision via Show My Homework.
3. Students who have identified special educational needs, who have a particular need for pastoral support and/or are finding it impossible to work from home will be able to come into school for up to four mornings a week. Please note some key points relating to this provision:
 - We are limited in terms of the number of places we can offer. The Sixth Form team will allocate places in priority order and it may be the case that we reduce the numbers of days available for individual students.
 - The Upper Hex and S201 will be available for students to work in. Students will be expected to be studying in silence and to bring headphones in with them to access online lessons. There won't be much opportunity for students to socialise, as the primary purpose of them being in school will be to focus on their online lessons and access support if they need it.
 - At least two members of the Sixth Form team will be available on each day to provide pastoral support.
 - **Please indicate if you wish to take up this offer for your child by completing the [survey](#) and we will contact you next week to confirm details. Students will only be able to attend with prior agreement from the Sixth Form team.**

For groups 2 and 3:

- The school day will run from 8.20am until 12.15pm.
- There will be no lunchtime because of the challenges of ensuring social distancing at meal times.
- Seating arrangements (and workstations in practical subjects) will be such that students are always at least two metres apart from one another.
- Students will enter and exit the building using a different door to students from other year groups. They will also use different toilets.
- Additional handwashing stations have been ordered. Students will be supervised washing their hands before entering the building and at other times throughout the day.

- 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. Handwash will be readily available throughout school, as will tissues and bins.
- Students 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).
- Students will have the opportunity to order a snack for breaktime (likely to be toast or equivalent) and this will be delivered to the Sixth Form area.

Rationale for plans

In putting together these plans, we have had to consider a very wide range of factors. I imagine it is fairly obvious why we have prioritised the students in groups 2 and 3. Perhaps it might be a little less obvious why we are not inviting more Year 12 students into school and it would be worth explaining the reasons for this. There are many, but the key ones are:

- Unlike Year 10, where all students have at least three subjects in common (i.e. English, Maths and Science), sixth form students all do different combinations of subjects. This means that it is impossible to avoid a significant amount of mixing of different groups, which is not at all sensible from a public health point of view.
- Any possible model that does enable students to come into school whilst respecting social distancing measures and has any regard to avoiding much mixing of groups means that individual students would not get much time in school at all. It is all rather complicated but, in essence, nobody would get more than 2–3 hours in any subject between now and the end of the year – and even these wouldn’t always be with the relevant class teacher.
- More importantly, putting together a timetable that allows students to come into school for face-to-face lessons means that we would have to reduce the number of online lessons for Year 12 students, potentially by quite a bit.

We have therefore concluded that, although there would be some benefits to all students being able to come into school at some point, they will get a much better deal overall if we focus on providing a comprehensive online offer, with the extra face-to-face support for those who most need it.

Transport

The government has asked that people avoid public transport and we ask that you respect this where possible. Similarly, it would not be wise for students from different households to share cars.

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

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 plans we have come up with (not just for Year 12, but also for Year 10 students, vulnerable students and those from families of key workers) represent 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. All we ask is that, whatever your own viewpoint, you appreciate that there are pressures in all kinds of competing directions at the moment.

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.

Finally, **only if your child is on one of the groups (i.e. groups 2 and 3) who we are inviting into school**, please don't forget to complete this brief [survey](#).

Kind regards



Gwyn Williams