



20 May 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

Re: Update 20 May 2020 Covid-19

I am writing to give you an update further to my brief letter of 19 May 2020 as I was hoping to be able to outline our arrangements to continue with both remote learning and a re-opening of school.

Unfortunately, I am not able to provide you with anything specific regarding re-opening as I hope you will understand why as you read through this letter.

As there has been many documents published by the Department for Education (DfE) providing guidance specific to the Covid-19 for educational settings I sought clarity, mainly for myself and so I searched the "web" looking for the most up to date information. On the afternoon of Friday 15 May 2020, I came across a DfE document that had not been sent into schools; a key document linked to this I have also included:

Actions for schools during the coronavirus outbreak – updated 15 May 2020

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-school-closures/guidance-for-schools-about-temporarily-closing>

Coronavirus (COVID-19): implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings – last updated 12 May 2020

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings>

I referenced a document (Making sense of advice and guidance) in my letter of 19 May 2020 which I produced in response to the advice and guidance and other documents that are linked within it. For your reference, I attach a copy as it became the basis for a Senior Leadership Team (SLT) meeting held on Tuesday 19 May 2020. The purpose of the meeting was to plan a strategy to implement for a re-opening of school to Year 10 and Year 12 pupils from 1 June 2020. This piece of information – a 1 June 2020 opening of secondary schools for all Year 10 and Year 12 pupils has not been communicated in an explicit way by the DfE or Government. The advice and guidance apply strict guidelines for school leaders to be able to re-open school – some of which, if applied would not in my opinion provide for an effective education. For example, one clear piece of guidance is that class sizes should be reduced in size to ensure social distancing of 2 metres which is advice we strictly have in place ; there is further advice that:

ensure that the same teacher(s) and other staff are assigned to each group and, as far as possible, these stay the same during the day and on subsequent days, recognising for secondary and college settings there will be some subject specialist rotation of staff

If we are to organise pupils into classes based on the Maths set, they are in, there will be three Set 1 Maths classes so on any given day, only one of these groups would be taught by their Maths teacher. Within this group there will be pupils of different sets in English and Science and they may all take different Option subject combinations. It would, therefore, not be possible to "teach" this group the subjects they may need to be "taught" in.



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My view would be to create a rota of different groups on different days to help them benefit from having the "face to face" contact with their specialist teachers. However, the guidance from the DfE states:

2.2 Can schools operate a staggered return or a rota system for pupils returning from 1 June?

Schools should not plan on the basis of a rota system for pupils returning from 1 June, either daily or weekly. We are asking schools to welcome back eligible pupils full-time, and do not expect schools to implement flexible approaches, such as rota systems.

Due to the foreseeable logistical problems, I contacted the Deputy Director of Children's Services to ask for advice on interpreting the guidance. The response was "you should plan for year 10 & 12 from the 1st June but that you need to do this in a way that works best for your school"

Following the planning session with my SLT, Bradford Council issued a statement late on Tuesday evening:

"Bradford Council has no intention of directing schools to open on 1 June or to force parents to send their children back and we are committed to working in partnership with school leaders, families and trade unions so that they can make sure their schools are safe environments for our children whenever they choose to open. Parents will not be fined if they choose not to send their children back to school at this time."

As I have written previously, our priority is always to educate your child ensuring their safety. As in all cases we have been presented with over the years I have been headteacher, we will find an effective solution to the problems we are faced with – whether it be part-time timetables or staggered timetables or some other format that works for the best interests of all. The Covid-19 crisis has placed us all into a situation that is unprecedented. We all want to return to a sense of normality, but this may not be for some time.

From the SLT meeting on Tuesday each of us in SLT have been assigned tasks to ensure we can propose a solution to the problem of how to effectively deliver education in school alongside remote learning for our Year 10 and Year 12 pupils. I am working with our Business Operations Manager to secure even more handwash, sanitiser, tissues, PPE and signage; I also working with our HR Manager to assess staffing levels for each of the key groups so we can create a rota to effectively deliver education.

As is the case for all schools, it will not be possible to open until all protective measures are in place. It may well be that having read through this letter so far, that you have decided that the brief points taken from a larger proposal does not adhere to the guidance, and even if it did, you still do not intend to send your child into school. I understand parents/carers views on this, and I ask that you contact school by email through enquiries or by contacting the year team to let us know if you would or would not send your child into school at a date in June to be decided once we have all risk assessments and protective measures in place.

There are several other key points I wish to clarify

1. The access to IT devices although published has not yet been put in place to support Local Authorities to access their entitlement. As a Local Authority school, we await notification of our allocation and how they are to be distributed. The following link is to the organisation commissioned to deliver digital learning, but not the providers of the equipment: <https://covid19.thekeysupport.com/news/digital-education-platform-scheme/?marker=content-body>

Until such a time that the system is in place, we will continue to provide refurbished laptops for those pupils whose parents/carers contact us for support

2. The number of Safeguarding cases remains low and as previously, if parents/carers have any safeguarding concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us on enquiries@titussaltschool.co.uk and one of our Designated Safeguarding Leads will be able to deal with the case

3. The recent advice from DfE regarding Bank Holiday 25 May 2020 is:

4.2 Are schools opening on the May bank holiday?

Schools should decide, in consultation with the parents of children who are currently attending school, whether it is necessary for them to continue to look after critical workers' children and vulnerable children over the May bank holiday.

We have been in contact with parents/carers of those who have been attending on a regular basis and ask that if for the 25 May 2020 it is not essential for those who have been attending to attend then we will close the school for the day (this will be the first day of closure since opening for the new term on 6 January 2020). All parents/carers have confirmed they will not be sending their child into school. Therefore, we will be closed Bank Holiday Monday

4. Food parcels that normally go out on a Monday, due to Bank Holiday closure will be delivered on Tuesday 26 May 2020.

As I have previously written, if any parent/carer has any concerns and who does not already have a contact with someone in school, please contact the school on:

enquiries@titussaltschool.co.uk

As I receive any further information, I will keep you updated. As is always the case, the situation is changing on a regular basis and making sense of the many documents of advice and guidance is challenging.

Once again, many thanks for your continued support.

Yours sincerely



Ian Morrel
Headteacher