



4 June 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

**Re: Update 4 June 2020 Covid-19**

I am writing to give you an update on our plans for a reopening of school to pupils in Years 10 and 12; as you are aware, we have remained open for the last eleven weeks for children of key workers, those with an EHCP and those who may be vulnerable. In addition, I wish to clarify a number of points in relation to the increased pressure of pupils returning to school as more parents are returning to work and in relation to the most recently published advice and guidance from the Department for Education (DfE).

**Reopening of school to Years 10 and 12**

In addition to this letter, you will receive a document titled Provisional Planning for Reopening in June – this is a document that details the planning that has taken place with my Senior Leadership Team; I have held a series of meetings with the school's Teacher Union Representatives and today our Business Operations Manager and I, alongside the Teacher Union Representatives, met with the Health & Safety Representatives of the Teachers' Unions. The meeting was to go through the detail of the document and for them to do a site visit to check the level of our response to the Teacher Union guidelines on the reopening of schools. They have approved the plans and offered advice on a few areas of consideration

I do not intend to go through the detail of the planning in this letter as I hope the document is clear and comprehensive in defining what it will be like from an operational point of view as we begin a gradual reopening to limited numbers of pupils in Years 10 and 12. I think it is important however to provide a summary of key points:

1. The reopening of school will not be to provide timetabled lessons; as the DfE guidance states: "We are asking secondary schools to offer this face-to-face support to supplement the remote education of year 10 and year 12 pupils, which should remain the predominant mode of education during this term for pupils in these year groups."
2. Only one quarter of each year group will be in school at any one time; on some days, pupils will be expected to remain in one classroom for three sessions and on other days they will be able to move to different rooms for option subjects which may allow for access to specialist facilities
3. The timetable included in the document ensures we operate within the range of the DfE guidelines and as such we will have in place social distancing from the point pupils enter the school site; there will not be the opportunity for social time and lunch will not be provided as the sessions will end before lunchtime (lunch will continue to be provided for the group of pupils who are already established as being the children of key workers, having an EHCP or regarded as vulnerable)
4. The groups in Year 10 will be organised by Maths setting on some days and will be determined by option groups on other days – pupils, parents/carers will receive an individual timetable next week for both Year 10 and Year 12
5. Classrooms will be set out so there is adequate space to seat twelve pupils in each room with one teacher
6. Pupils will be provided with paper and folders so any work they do during their time in face to face sessions can be stored

7. Pupils will be asked to bring their own writing equipment with them and at least one bottle of water – there will not be the option to refill a water bottle as the school's water coolers will be taped off to reduce the risk of transmission

If after reading this letter and the separate document parents/carers have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact school on [enquiries@fitussaltschool.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@fitussaltschool.co.uk). As previously requested, if parents/carers are clear that they do not wish their child to return under the current circumstances I would very much appreciate them contacting school so we can factor this into our planning.

### **Arrangements for pupils of Critical Workers and those with EHCP and vulnerable**

In addition to planning and implementing plans for reopening for Years 10 and 12 we continue to provide for pupils whose parents are key workers and those who are vulnerable. The numbers of pupils who are now attending as parents/carers inform us they are within these categories is meaning that from 15 June 2020 the arrangements we currently have in place will change to be able to meet the increased demand. I wish to stress that the advice and guidance on whether children of critical workers should attend school has not changed and the reopening of secondary schools is for pupils in Years 10 and 12 only:

The advice states that:

- People should stay at home as much as possible and if they go out then they should do so within the guidelines and ensure that protective measures including social distancing are in place
- Children of secondary school age can be left unattended by parents at home if it is safe to do so
- Parents/carers will not be penalised if their child does not attend school
- Remote learning remains the predominant mode of education for all pupils

Over the last eleven weeks we have been able to take a relaxed approach to the provision in school for this group of pupils. As we reopen the school to pupils in Years 10 and 12, we will have in place a more formal system to reflect a return to school expectations. This will include:

1. The creation of groups of no more than twelve pupils which will become fixed groups so even if a pupil does not attend all week the membership of the group will not change to reduce the interaction with another group – this will be the same as the “bubble” model used in primary schools
2. The DfE have changed the guidance on the national voucher scheme which impacts on the school provision and therefore from the 15 June 2020 lunch will not be provided for this group of pupils unless eligible for free school meals but lunch will be available for them to purchase from a set menu
3. A more formal lesson structure will be put in place which will be based on the use of Teams as members of staff in school will not be expected to deliver subject lessons; there may be the opportunity to do sport or creative work but this will depend upon the availability of specialist members of staff
4. There will need to be a significant reduction of social interaction as pupil numbers increase and we must run this provision alongside the delivery of face to face sessions for Years 10 and 12

### **National Voucher Scheme and food parcels**

The DfE have issued new guidelines - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-free-school-meals-guidance> which is a very strict approach that will impact on the way we

have run our provision and provided for as many pupils and their families as we have been able. The following is an extract from the guidance:

### **National voucher scheme**

As schools open more widely, and their kitchens reopen, we expect schools to make food parcels available for collection or delivery for any children that are eligible for free school meals who are staying at home.

Arranging food parcels helps ensure that eligible children have access to a healthy free meal and can also help the school to stay in contact with those families. We know that many schools have made excellent food parcel arrangements throughout this period.

If your school catering service cannot provide meals or food parcels for children who are at home, you can continue to offer vouchers to families of eligible pupils.

Before ordering vouchers, check which pupils are eligible and would be receiving benefits-related free school meals.

We are monitoring voucher orders at school level to broadly check if they are ordering in line with our estimates of the number of eligible children, recognising that for some schools this will be lower if they are providing food parcels, or using a local arrangement. If a school's orders are higher than expected, we may speak to the school about why this has occurred and will take forward any necessary action to rectify the position.

The emphasis is clearly on schools providing food parcels and a reduction in the Government's voucher scheme. Since before the introduction of the voucher scheme and any guidance from the DfE, we provided food parcels for pupils we knew to be eligible and in some cases for their wider family and those pupils who we knew were not eligible under the Government's criteria but we knew were finding difficulty in providing meals.

As the voucher scheme is phased out by Government, we will continue to provide food parcels not only for those pupils who we know to be eligible but for those who we also know to be finding difficulty. Through the contacts we have with families I appreciate you letting us know if you no longer wish to receive a food parcel as your circumstances have changed or, in light of the change to the Government's approach you will require a food parcel as the voucher scheme is phased out.

### **Transition**

I am very aware that Year 6 into Year 7 transition cannot take place in the format that it has traditionally and it is extremely unlikely that there will be any new Year 7 gathering before the new term either for pupils or parents/carers. I know Mrs Wilby before her maternity leave and Mrs Peers who has taken on the role have been in contact by post and we are receiving responses to the challenges set to help us get to know our new pupils. We have considered what a Transition programme will look like if we are able to accept small groups into school for visits and limited activities before an autumn start.

Through discussions with Faculty and Subject Leaders and Year Teams we are aware that there are other transition points in school that we have not been able to address in the way we usually do; these include Year 9 into Year 10 and Year 11 into Year 12 which are based on "Taster Days" and workshop activities to experience learning in new option choice subjects. We will have to await further advice and guidance from DfE on the success of the reopening to Years 10 and 12 before we are able to consider a transitional experience for these year groups

### **Other key points**

1. The access to IT devices although published has still not been put in place to support Local Authorities to access their entitlement. As a Local Authority school, we still 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](mailto:enquiries@titussaltschool.co.uk) and one of our Designated Safeguarding Leads will be able to deal with the case
3. We continue to recruit for the few vacancies we have had so that we will have a full complement of members of staff for the new term. Last Friday we successfully recruited our new SENDCO who has already been in school to meet with Mrs Karran and Mrs Dutton-Taylor to ensure the handover process has begun

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:

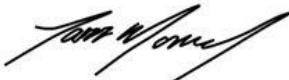
[enquiries@titussaltschool.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@titussaltschool.co.uk)

I have been very pleased to see the many results from the recent project based work for Key Stage 3 – I have been impressed with the baking, photography and model making which were all ways of meeting the challenge in Computing; the Bake Off Challenge continues to be of an incredibly high standard and the photography in Geography appears to be very professional. I hope you continue to get involved in the range of challenges and enjoy being creative.

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