



SIR THOMAS FREMANTLE SCHOOL

A CO-EDUCATIONAL SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS AGED 11-19

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15th May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Re: Headteacher's Update

I hope this update finds you and your family in good health.

I always try to keep you all as up to date as possible and hope you understand that a fortnightly update allows me to share more detail than if I completed a weekly update. I would like to explain my rationale for this decision. Between the time the Prime Minister made his announcement on Sunday 8th May and this evening, the finer details of a return have evolved each day. Only yesterday, the Government released a further and more detailed document about the Primary return and the preparations those at Primary should be making. After speaking with Primary colleagues, I know they are having to rework the plans they had started to develop on Monday. With this in mind, I will always ensure I have accurate and detailed information before presenting the STFS's interpretation of the same information you receive.

With regard to Secondary schools, we have had no further detail other than to prepare for some "face to face time" for Year 10 and Year 12 students. This is the only update (at the time of writing) from the Government regarding Secondary Schools. This "face to face time" would not mean the entire year group returning to school for 'normal lessons'. The extract below is taken from Schools Week, an Education Publication, and refers to Gavin Williamson's response to Parliament about secondary students returning:

During the session, Williamson was asked what the government meant by "face-to-face support" for year 10 and 12 pupils, because there isn't much detail on that part of the proposal in the government guidance.

Williamson said he wanted "all children in those year groups to have the opportunity to go into school and speak with their teachers".

Those teachers will then "make an assessment of what learning and support that they need to have over the following weeks as we approach the summer holidays, but also making sure they set the work at the right level so through the summer holidays children can benefit from learning through those six weeks".

The full article can be found at the following link:

https://schoolsweek.co.uk/coronavirus-8-things-we-learned-from-gavin-williamson-on-plans-to-reopen-schools/amp/?_twitter_impression=true



Again, we are making preparations for this to happen, but until the Government's expectations and guidance are released with the finer details, it makes planning very challenging. There are a number of factors to consider before any form of reopening commences and, like you, my priority will be the health and safety of your child and the health and safety of the staff at STFS. If the scientific evidence is presented that allows for Year 10 and Year 12 students to attend in some capacity before the Summer break, you will be informed of the arrangements in good time. The Government have set out what actions schools can be taking to ensure a 'safe' return to school in the future. I include the link as I think you should have had the opportunity to read the document if you haven't already done so.

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

There has been no specific comment regarding those in Years 7, 8 or 9 and therefore we can only assume that students in these year groups will not be attending school prior to the Summer break. To this end, students in Year 7, 8 & 9 should continue to complete the work that is set by their class teachers in preparation for a return in September, if they are able to. We are continuing to look at the provision of work being set for students and will, of course, keep you updated with any changes and developments.

I want to reassure you that we will not be pressuring any pupil to come into school. We'll keep you updated with our preparations for making sure the school is as safe as possible, so that you and your child can make an informed decision about whether to come in.

In the meantime, the school is still open **only** for vulnerable pupils and the children of critical workers. We know some employers will be encouraging you to return to work, but we're not in a position right now to extend places to other pupils.

I fully appreciate how challenging this is for you as parents and students. As a school community there is nothing we want more than to be back at work teaching the children we genuinely care about. However, we must be satisfied that the position we put children and staff in is safe and I am able to fulfil my duty of care to all at STFS.

Please stay safe and take care of yourselves and each other.

Yours faithfully,

Neale Pledger
Headteacher

