



SIR THOMAS FREMANTLE SCHOOL

A CO-EDUCATIONAL SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS AGED 11-19

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Dear Parents and Carers,

Re: Headteacher's Update

I write to explain how our provision for Year 10 and Year 12 will be evolving after half term. As you will be aware, the Government have asked schools to prepare for increased "face to face time" for students who will be sitting exams next year. Currently, we do not know what format exams will take next year, and there are many questions that schools are still waiting to have answered about the exam process. This clearly makes it very difficult to know what curriculum we should be delivering to students in Year 10 and 12. However, for the time being, we will continue to follow our curriculum plans in preparation for exams next year. My instinct is that those expecting to sit exams next year will do so, but in a modified format. However, until there is confirmation about next year, this is only speculation.

Due to the uncertainty around how COVID-19 manifests itself in young people and whether young people transmit the disease differently, STFS and the Governing Body have decided to take an approach which focuses on the health and safety of the students and staff. Whilst the scientific advice has been that very few teachers and students have died as a result of COVID-19, I am determined to protect students and staff at STFS for as long as possible. One death in a school community as a result of this disease is too many, and a risk we are not willing to take. With this in mind, we have decided to move to teaching one online live lesson per day for those in Year 10 and Year 12 to increase their face to face learning time.

Live lessons bring a host of alternative challenges for students and staff, but we feel it is an appropriate format given the lack of scientific evidence around a safe return to school. A timetable will be published, and students will be able to log in to one live lesson per day with two subject specialists. We have decided to use two teachers per session; this will allow one to deliver the learning and the other to monitor questions, technology issues or any misuse of the session. Each lesson will be recorded to ensure protection for staff and students. We are aware that a number of students are acting as carers and subsequently do not start their work until the evening. With this in mind, recorded lessons will also be made available for students to review their learning or catch up with their learning if they missed the lesson.

We are also looking at how we can create further opportunities to stretch and challenge those learners who are completing work to a high standard. Their efforts are recognised by their teachers and we want to ensure that all abilities are catered for in the coming weeks.



In addition to this, we are analysing our engagement and work tracker for Year 10 and 12 and will be offering an invitation to students who are struggling to complete work at home to come in to school where they can work under supervision of two members of staff. I would like to be clear here that there will not be lessons in school for those who are struggling with their work. The sessions will, however, give us an opportunity to offer these students clear guidance on how they can engage more actively with the work set and ensure they reduce gaps in their knowledge prior to next academic year. We can only accommodate a small number of children and we will base our invitations on those who have not engaged with their work fully, and have been risk assessed previously as safe to attend school. If there are more students that we can safely accommodate as the weeks progress, we may need to put a rota in place to control numbers. We will also prioritise those students deemed as vulnerable or those of critical workers should the numbers become too great or staffing issues become a challenge. We also appreciate that transport may be an issue for some of you and again will factor this in to our decision making. Just to be clear, students in Year 10 or 12 will be invited to attend school; they should not attend until this invitation has been received and confirmed. Any student arriving at school without an invitation will be refused entry and asked to return home.

Once we have offered a place, you, as parents and carers, are well within your rights to turn down the place if you feel the current situation is not safe enough. Students attending school currently are all following clear guidance about their interactions with their peers and teachers. All those on site need to wash and sanitise their hands before entry; they all remain two metres apart at all times and have their own permanent desk to ensure consistency. All students are restricted to the café area in school, using the toilets in the changing rooms which are cleaned throughout the day. Any Year 10 or 12 joining us would not follow the same programme as those who have been attending school as children of Critical Workers or students who are considered the most vulnerable. Students who are 'clinically vulnerable' or are shielding a family member who is 'critically vulnerable' should not attend school under any circumstances. The following link offers more detail as to who is considered 'clinically vulnerable':

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19>

Over the next two weeks, we will continue to finalise the plans and establish a timetable. It is our intention to be able to offer this provision from the 8th June. This is subject to change at late notice. We will communicate again by Wednesday 3rd June when we will share the timetable for online lessons, guidance for all those taking part and the expectations that all users are expected to adhere to. We will ensure there are measures in place to protect all users and any misuse will be result in removal from all live lessons. We will have a zero-tolerance approach to this.

Year 12 tutors have emailed students to check they have access to our Microsoft Teams platform. Please make sure your child replies to the email and that they let their tutor know of any issues with accessing emails.

If you do not wish for your child to be part of the live lesson recording can you inform us via email receptionist@sirthomasfremantle.org.



I think we all accept that this has been a hugely challenging time and we all have concerns about how life in September will pan out. We hope that by modifying our provision for Year 10 and 12 students, we will have a clear picture of their needs and what solutions we can implement to best support them, whilst protecting all within the STFS community. I fully appreciate that there will be concerns around your child's progress, and I want to reassure you that we will do everything within our power to reduce any gaps prior to the exam season next Summer.

I hope that you and your family remain healthy and I cannot thank you enough for the support and kind emails that have been coming through. These really do make the difference to my day.

Take care of yourselves and each other.

Yours faithfully,

Neale Pledger
Headteacher

