

14th June 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Update from Highgate Wood School (No. 8)

As ever, I hope that you are all well and that you have had a good week.

This week our focus has been increasingly on Monday 15th June and putting together our final touches to making sure that the school is ready for accommodating our year 10s on site for their progress tutorials in English, maths and science. We are ready now and we are as confident as we can be that our students and staff will be safe. It is reassuring to know that so many of you share that confidence as is evidenced by the survey returns from the parents/carers of year 10 children. The large majority of you have confirmed that you will be sending your son/daughter into school in the next fortnight.

Depending on when your year 10 child is scheduled to come into school, you will receive notification about exactly what is happening and when. For those children who are coming in later in the week or possibly even the following week, please be patient and look out for the communication that will be coming soon. If you have any queries about this, please direct them to Mr Hewitt (che@hws.haringey.sch.uk). We cannot wait to see our year 10s face to face – socially distanced of course!

As you know, despite the fact that very few students and staff are on site at the moment, an awful lot is happening at HWS, which you can keep up to date with via the School's website www.hws.haringey.sch.uk and the School's Twitter account www.twitter.com/highgatewood.

Thoughts on September

I have shared some initial thoughts with you on what will happen in September in a previous letter. However, it is important to insert a big caveat – we do not know anything for certain yet. Until the government reveals their plans, schools will have to consider a range of scenarios and plan for each one accordingly.

In Wales, the schools are going back on 29th June for all students, with an expectation that no more than a third of children will attend school on any particular day. The logistics of making that work will mean that schools in Wales will have to continue their reliance on online remote learning despite welcoming back all their students a few times a week. If our government follows a similar path in September (which they may or may not), we will have to be mindful of

- How we decide which children come in and when
- Whether to prioritise some groups over others – for example, I am aware that year September's 11 and year 13 will be a priority given their preparation for public exams, but we also will factor in that our current years 7, 8 and 9 have been out of school for many months now and they will need a lot of support

Highgate Wood School Student Council supports individual action to address the issues of Climate Change and promotes the United Nations top 10 recommendations.



5-minute showers



Drive less



Lights off



Local produce



Recycle



Meat-free meals



Zero-waste fashion



Unplug



Refill and reuse



Bring your own bag

- What we will use those sessions for given the amount of time that children have been out of school. We will have to find a way of assessing where students are at in their learning so that we can be focused on teaching the right things that are needed for catch up. This involves a lot of planning and re-organisation of extensive plans already in place for 'normal' times
- The importance of getting our online remote provision right for all students. In this scenario, it would be clear that what we are setting online would continue to be an integral part of the schooling experience for children until we get back to normal. We have been working hard at this and will continue to do so to ensure that provision in September is even better, more consistent and focused more heavily of teacher input, explanation and interaction – with feedback wherever opportunities are. We are currently moving towards this with our year 12 students. We would like to move towards that for September for all year groups
- Keeping children safe when higher numbers return. The implications of having a quarter of the school or a third of the school in at the same time are considerable when planning for things like social distancing, cleaning schedules, staggered break and start times, provision of break and lunch, etc. What we have put in place now for our year 10s will no doubt help us, but scaling this up will not be without it's challenges

Therefore, these are some of the things that we are already things that we are already thinking about, with different variations in response to different scenarios. The most important thing for me to say to parents and carers is that we will be ready, irrespective of what scenario we are eventually presented with. We are in uncharted territory and we are learning as we go, and our intention is to be even better in September than we were in April. Of course, I will keep parents updated as soon as the government starts to reveal what their plans are for schools.

Small School – A Clarification

As you will be aware, during this period of time we have been operating a small school which is the provision that all schools were ask to put on for students in all year groups who are children of key worker parents and/or children who are considered to be vulnerable. This will continue on Monday and will operate alongside the progress tutorials for year 10 and the small school for year 12.

In the last couple of weeks, we have had some parental requests to send their children to school to attend the small school on the basis that their children struggling at home. I completely understand the logic behind those requests in this challenging time. However, it is important to point out that the small school was established for a specific purpose (as described above) and therefore has limited capacity. For children who do not meet the criteria to attend small school we will seek other solutions to support you, but please don't be upset or offended if we have to decline your request on this basis. Our team of form tutors, subject teachers and our safeguarding team are all here to help and all our contactable via e-mail – all addresses are available on the school website.

Parent/Carer Fund (PCF)

I am taking this opportunity to again repeat the notice regarding our Parent/Carer Fund. The PCF allows our parents and carers to donate to the school. Currently, we have a significant project planned with regards to renovating parts of the dining hall and playground to provide a better and more comfortable dining experience for our students. This includes having outdoor covered spaces. These are part of the plans that we have to implement our split lunches approach in September. The plans that we are seeking to implement do come at a considerable cost, as I am sure you can imagine. We intend to prioritise our PCF to support this work and would very much welcome any donations. . For more information on the Parent Carer Fund please visit <https://bit.ly/hwsfundraising> on the school website, or you can go direct to <http://bit.ly/hwsdonate> to set up a donation.

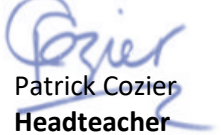
We are always grateful to receive any donations that families can afford to make. However, I want to impress upon you that all donations are voluntary and that no one should ever feel pressured into donating money that they cannot afford.

Support information for Parents and Carers

Again,. rather than repeat the links and notices regarding support and helplines for parents and carers, we have published these on our Covid blog at <http://bit.ly/hwscovid4>. Here you will find the links that were contained in my last letter and elsewhere, a link for critical workers can register with the school and a reminder to parents that, should your change of circumstance mean that you may now be eligible for Free School Meals, you should apply without delay.

Take care and stay safe!

Regards



Patrick Cozier
Headteacher