

22nd May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Update from Highgate Wood School

I hope that you are all well and looking forward to the half term and a break from the home schooling that we have been asking you to do! My staff will certainly attest to the fact that schooling is very tiring work... we have been doing that remotely, but you have been responsible for supervising, supporting and cajoling your children into getting the work done. I am sure that we could all do with a rest.

This is the sixth of our weekly update letters. That alone is frightening as it shows how quickly time is passing and gives an indication as to just how long we have been in this situation. We are all desperate to return to work and to resume doing the very thing that we are passionate about... helping children be the best that they can be. We are doing our best remotely, but nothing beats the real thing. However, we intend to adopt a cautious approach to any return (as you will see below).

I also want to remind you that you can keep up to date with what is happening at HWS via the School's website www.hws.haringey.sch.uk and the School's Twitter account www.twitter.com/highgatewood.

Return to School Planning – an Update

You will recall from last week's letter that I set out some principles for a return to school that we agreed as a group of Haringey secondary schools, namely

1. **Focus on high quality remote learning** – This is the main focus across all the schools, as this will form the cornerstone of the provision for all students in all year groups. Any provision in school for year 10 and year 12 students will supplement the online remote learning that is happening
2. **A commitment to a staggered start to year 10 and year 12 student attendance** – There is a view from the secondary Headteachers that student safety whilst travelling to and from school could be a challenge. We have agreed that by staggering when our provision for year 10s and 12s will start across the schools we will reduce the pressure on transport and travel

I gave my assurances last week that I would give you more specific details this week about our plans at HWS. The key points are set out below.

The Highgate Wood Position

Firstly, I think it is important to point out that our plan at HWS is to re-open to wider students when we believe it is safe to do so. This means that we will have

- Consulted with staff, trade unions and governors
- Surveyed our year 10 and year 12 parents to determine the likely numbers of students who will attend (the surveys were sent out to parents and carers earlier this week)

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



- Conducted the appropriate risk assessments in conjunction with Haringey health and safety advice (which has been subject to consultation with all professional associations/trade unions)
- Reviewed our staffing to establish which members of staff are likely to be available

We are making a conscious choice to not be bound by the dates being talked about by the government. The 1st of June is too ambitious in terms of all the planning that must take place. However, I do believe that it is ultimately helpful for all concerned to have some notion of a target date for return. What I know from my conversations with Haringey Schools is that it is likely that primary schools in the borough will be starting with their priority year groups from the Monday 8th June.

We will be aiming to bring the first groups of year 10 students (not all students in one go) later that week from Wednesday 10th June. However, this is all subject to the above and therefore could change.

Our view is as follows:

Year 10

- We want all year 10 students to come into school for two days per fortnight in small 'bubble groups' to receive progress tutorials in English, maths and science. These will be carefully staggered sessions across the fortnight, maintaining the same groups across the three subjects to reduce the risk of transmission – social distancing will be in place and it is likely that we will run all sessions in the morning, avoiding afternoons if possible – we will confirm this after half term
- Other subjects will continue to focus on remote learning and developing what is already in place – trying wherever possible to increase the amount of direct instruction that students receive and being available to provide online support
- Gradually, we want to introduce some pre-recorded lessons for year 10 students in all subjects.

Year 12

- Initially we will not be bringing year 12s onto site. The reason for this is there is no way of giving face-to-face contact with subjects teachers whilst maintaining 'bubble groups' of students who have no contact with others. Year 12 students do not do the same subjects, so groups would have to be mixed around which increases the chances of transmission. We do not wish to risk this
- We will start delivering pre-recorded lessons to year 12s as soon as possible – starting with a few members of staff and increasing as quickly as possible
- Year 12 will have access to online Zoom small group progress tutorials from subject staff to check on the work they have been doing and giving general support and advice.
- All subjects will continue to focus on remote learning and developing what is already in place – trying wherever possible to increase the amount of direct instruction that students receive and being available to provide online support

As a reminder to parents and carers, below is a list of the things that we will put in place to ensure that health and safety is paramount and that social distancing is in place for when our year 10 students are onsite.

- There will be significantly reduced numbers of students in school at any one time to allow for social distancing measures to be implemented
- We will be redesigning classrooms so children have maximum space to spread out.
- There will be staggered arrival and departure times for different groups of students
- There will be regular scheduled handwashing throughout the day
- Cleaning of the school site will take place throughout the day.
- Students will only be in contact with other students within their groups and we will minimise the movement around the school
- Handling and sharing of resources will be kept to a minimum where possible
- Students will not be expected to wear school uniform

We hope that these measures will reassure everyone that once we return to school our students and staff will be as safe as is possible in these times.

Remote Learning Tasks – Managing the Workload

To help families and children manage their workload of remote learning tasks we will be telling them that the due date on home-learning is advisory only and has generally been set simply to help students organise their work. Students should always aim to complete set work within a week of the due date, but should not feel pressured to submit it before that unless there has been a specific request by the teacher. No students will get into trouble for work that is 'late' or incomplete. We have asked all staff always be supportive. If you have any queries regarding this, please contact Mr C. Hewitt (che@hws.haringey.sch.uk)

Home Learning Tasks – Have a break over the Half Term

Everyone has been working hard, and so we want half term to be a genuine break for all. We have asked staff not to set any additional home learning tasks during this period so that everyone can relax and have some enjoyable family time.

Parent Governor Vacancies

We recently advertised for four parent governors for the HWS governing body. We have successfully filled two vacancies, but that does leave us with two more to fill. We will be re-advertising for those vacancies shortly. I would also like to remind our parents from different ethnic backgrounds that we are very keen to increase the diversity and breadth of representation across the governing body, so we particularly welcome nominations from those communities. If anyone wants to find out more they should contact my PA Mrs K. Ozturk (koz@hws.haringey.sch.uk).

Parent/Carer Fund (PCF)

Many of you will be aware of the Parent/Carer Fund that we have at HWS. 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.

Eid Mubarak

We have many Muslim staff, students and families who have been observing the holy month of Ramadan for the past few weeks. This weekend Eid celebrations will mark the end of this period all over the world. I would like to wish all of our Muslim community a blessed and joyful day on Sunday. Eid Mubarak!

Mental Health and Well-Being

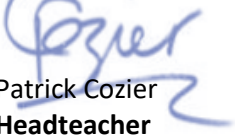
For anyone who is struggling during this period, help is available via Haringey Local Authority. The main information can be found here: <https://bit.ly/hwsmh>

1. Mental Health Support Team Telephone Support Line – Open to all Haringey Schools 9am-3pm Monday-Friday. We are here to listen and support you with your worries and emotions. For: Children/ young people, parents/ carers, school staff.
Tel: 0208 702 6035
Beh-tr.camhstrailblazerinbox@nhs.net
2. Haringey CHOICES - for young people up to the age of 17 years and their families.
Haringey Choices: www.haringeychoices.org
Contact page: www.haringeychoices.org/contact-us
Tel: 020 8702 3405
3. Kooth – online counselling support 11 – 25 years
<https://www.kooth.com/>

... And Finally

I would like to thank all of our families for their continued support! Have a great weekend and half term. Take care and stay safe!

Regards


Patrick Cozier
Headteacher