



8th June 2020

Dear Parents/carers

I would like to start by acknowledging the ongoing support of all members of #teamnailsea. This current period is, truly, one of the most challenging periods of my twenty years of working in education. We are now entering a new phase and there is nothing I want more than to be able to welcome students back, as long as it is safe to do so. I do want to thank all of our staff for their continued hard work. I would not be able to update you on our current plans if it wasn't for this massive team effort.

Wider opening for years 10 and 12

Since the government announcement about wider opening we have remained committed to taking a cautious and measured approach. Many of you will be aware of the concerns about the infection rates in the South West and the well publicised recent situation at Weston Hospital. We completely understand that many of you will be concerned about the safety of your child as they prepare to return.

Following advice from Public Health England and bearing all of the government guidance in mind we are currently planning our further opening to years 10 and 12 from 15th June. Please know that we will do everything in our power to ensure that our students and staff return to the safest possible environment. This is why classrooms and communal spaces will look markedly different when we return.

Once these final plans have been confirmed with governors and staff, (a governor meeting is scheduled for this evening) parents of year 10 and 12 students will receive a letter informing them of their child's sessions at school. There will also be further guidelines sent home about how the school will operate under social distancing measures.

Provision for key worker children/vulnerable children

The school continues to remain open for students in these categories. With the increase of students being on site it is now even more important, in order to maintain the cleaning and supervision of those on site, that staff are aware of which students will be attending, when.

As such we are now asking for parents to notify us about student attendance one week in advance. Parents will need to notify their child's Head of House no later than Friday at noon, for any attendance in the following week. As such, parents needing to book this provision should contact their Head of House **by Friday 12th June at noon at the latest.**

From 15th June (with increased numbers on site) the main school canteen will also not be in operation. Students attending school will need to confirm if they wish to purchase a packed lunch that will be purchased on site, using their cards in the normal way. Students can choose instead to bring their own packed lunch and those entitled to free school meals will have this lunch provided. Further details will be confirmed in a follow up letter, sent later in the week.

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Students attending this provision should continue to enter through the main reception and they will be based in the 6th form area during the day.

Although school uniform is not expected to be worn, students should be mindful that the choice of clothing should be appropriate for a work environment. Given possible hot weather over the course of the next few weeks, it is important that clothing maintains levels of modesty. Students will be asked to return home to change if necessary. Students are also asked to wear a different set of clothes every time they attend.

Despite 'school' operating in a different way for these students, the expectations regarding behaviour remains the same as it would during the normal school day. Our consequence system is still used by the staff supervising and if students cannot meet these expectations and/or are placing themselves or others at a health and safety risk, parents will be contacted to collect them.

Continuation of Home Learning

The government has made it clear that any contact with students in school is a supplement to ongoing home learning which will be the predominant form of education for all students for the remainder of term 6. Work is continuing to be set on Mondays and submissions are now expected on Fridays, continuing for the remainder of term as outlined below:

Term 6 Cycle 2 - Monday 8th June – Fri 12th June

Term 6 Cycle 3 – Mon 15th June - Fri 19th June

Term 6 Cycle 4 - Mon 22nd June - Fri 26th June

Term 6 Cycle 5 – Mon 29th June – Fri 3rd July

Term 6 Cycle 6 – Mon 6th July – Fri 10th July

Term 6 Cycle 7 – Mon 13th July – Fri 17th July

The school is happy to print out paper copies of work where there are problems in accessing tasks. These will need to be collected from main reception and parents are encouraged to liaise with their child's Head of House if this is something that is required.

Many staff are experimenting with narrated PowerPoints or video tutorials to enrich this offer. I am aware of the wish for more online based learning but currently it is only used nationally in about 1 in 10 settings. In addition, research suggests it may not be the best method for delivering new curriculum material, hence the tentative exploration at this stage in our home learning provision. I am also conscious that in making this style of home learning 'the norm' it could disenfranchise and alienate the proportion of students who do not have computers to support this, so we are continuing to be cautious about the use of online 'live' lessons.

Staff are continuing to give feedback to students on the identified tasks through SMH. As a reminder, please do contact teachers via email if there are any issues or concerns.

Any issues or queries regarding the tasks should be directed to the member of staff who has set the piece of work in the first instance. This can be done through SMHW or to their school email address.

ICT access

As you may have heard the government are keen to provide ICT and Wifi access for those families that currently do not have this at home. We are still awaiting the confirmation of the machines we have been allocated as a school through the initiative announced by the government in May.

In the meantime, if any family or local business has any ICT equipment (laptops/tablets) that they would be able to donate to the school I know that many families that we would pass them on to, would be very grateful. If you believe you could donate any equipment please contact me directly on DElliott@nailseaschool.com so that we can liaise about how our ICT team would clean the machines and ensure they are secure and appropriate for our students to use.

Communication

Staff are continuing to make check in calls – approaching 1000 calls made in recent weeks - to support our students and families whilst they are at home. I am sorry if some feel they have missed out on these calls. Further communication methods include this weekly letter, daily updates on social media through Facebook and Twitter, updating the website and direct contact through email. We are constantly trying to improve what we do in this area, for example we are planning to launch a school Instagram account this term. We would always encourage students and parents to engage in these two way methods of communication - if there are ever any concerns or queries you may have please contact us.

Black Lives Matter

As well as preparing for the wider opening of the school, on a personal level I have been deeply upset seeing the scenes unfold in the USA following the tragic murder of George Floyd and the subsequent Black Lives Matter protests. As a school in a predominately white area, I am aware of the huge responsibility to ensure that all of our students understand and celebrate diversity. I know many staff have focused on these issues in the work set over the last cycle and we will continue to look at our curriculum ahead of students returning to school so that our young people can discuss this incredibly important issue. This one event has to be seen in the wider context of the history of racism and oppression in many countries across the world and education has a significant part to play in understanding this. During this unusual time the majority of you will have more opportunity than ever to talk to your children. The terrible current situation in America can be turned into a positive if it becomes the catalyst for honest and open conversation with our students/your children.

As ever, thank you for your support and please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or queries.

Yours faithfully

Mrs Dee Elliott
Head teacher