



## Marden High School

Friday 29th May 2020

Dear All,

There have been further announcements from the government since I last wrote regarding some clarification of its ambition for schools to increase the number of students coming into school, and since Thursday the government has confirmed that it believes it is safe for schools to start welcoming back some year groups in June.

In response to this government advice we are now making cautious plans to invite Year 10 into school in small groups, at some point this half term. Any such moves will, of course, be subject to a rigorous and comprehensive risk assessment being put together by the senior leadership team and governors, which will aim to reduce the risks of spreading the virus in school. The decision has been made for this addition of students and staff into the school building to be started on a small scale, so that we can see clearly any effects, positive or negative, before we start to upscale. There will be further information next week on this website on our plans for expanding attendance of students at school.

When students do come into school, it will be for the first time in many weeks. We are conscious that they will be bringing with them a range of different lockdown experiences and a range of emotions. Meanwhile the risks of transmission are still present and we are operating in a situation that is far from what we remember as 'normal'. For this reason our expectations of what can be achieved by this limited amount of face to face contact are:

- Give every individual student some support and reassurance so that they leave confident to continue with their home learning
- Praise and encourage the efforts of students to date
- Reinforce resilience and good study habits (refer to study skills) through praise and acknowledgement of progress made so far in relation to home learning attitude
- Provide students with the opportunity to ask questions; subject specific or otherwise

When we send details out to families inviting Year 10 students in, we will also be asking them to complete a short survey reflecting their home learning experience, in preparation for their time in school. This will help them and the staff, to get the most out of the sessions they attend.

We can be cautiously optimistic that nationally the number of virus cases is starting to reduce, but this is clearly a gradual process and all the signs are that we will not, in fact, be able to hold our usual transition days for Year 6 pupils. It remains, however, a priority of ours to ensure that all the children feel comfortable and happy in making the exciting move to Marden High School, and so:

- We are currently making a video to publish on our website and to send to primary schools with the aim of giving students an idea of what it is like to be a Marden Student and to introduce them to some key staff.
- As our parents induction evening on 7th July is not going ahead all of the relevant information will be published on our school website alongside a video aimed at introducing parents to key staff.
- We will also be holding a remote New Parents Question and Answer Evening. This will be an opportunity for parents to post questions and receive answers in real time.
- In the meantime, our transition staff are working hard using information collected from the primary schools, to prepare them for what promises to be a great start to Marden High School.

As we get ready to start a new half term, albeit again a very unusual one, we are looking forward to receiving more excellent work from our students, and being able to give them feedback to help them understand how they can continue to make good progress. Our students have done so well so far, and I am confident that they will continue in their efforts in the same great style over the coming weeks. In the words of Dave Ramsey, "Just keep taking the next step, and keep having excellence in the ordinary."

Take care and look after each other.



Mr M. Snape  
Head Teacher