



22 May 2020
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ST JOHN'S MARLBOROUGH – COVID 19

Dear Parents and Carers

As we approach the end of Term 5 and prepare to enter the break, I hope that you and your families are all safe and well. St John's continues to plan for the next steps in accordance with the Government protocols. However, as I write we are still awaiting the clear guidance promised by the Department for Education, on how secondary schools are going to be able to open safely for Years 10 and 12 in Term 6. We are planning to be able to offer a curriculum of sorts which will take place in the Academy buildings, but this will not be able to happen before the 15th June. That is the earliest tentative date that Excalibur are allowing us to aim for but until I receive clarity from Central Government, I cannot confirm what this is going to look like for certain. As soon as I can, please be assured that I will publish plans and provide the relevant information as quickly as possible.

Since the students have all been gone, things will have changed physically around the school site as well as how the school operates. Before we bring the students back, we intend to prepare them for the changes so that when we start to function again, everybody has confidence in what we are putting in place. Reassuring the staff, students and parents is going to be a key factor in re-opening and those that require the most reassurance will be identified and given the extra that they need. To that end we are putting a great deal in place ranging from hand sanitiser stations in the majority of classrooms, corridors and circulation areas; developing the one-way system to work around the whole school, and placing clear markings across the whole site which will help make social distancing possible. The physical changes compliment what we are working towards with the delivery of the curriculum as well as classroom teaching, lesson changeovers and social timings for break and lunch, which will all have to change to some extent. The safety of the 900+ students who rely on public transport to get to school has also all had to have been considered and the working practices of staff and visitors has needed significant adaptation. Then there are the ways that we feed the students and keep the site clean – all have to be looked into and risk assessed. St John's is a tremendous school which relishes challenge and I have absolute confidence that we will be ready for the students as soon as we possibly can be.

There is no indication that students in Key Stage 3 will be returning before September and we want to assure you that they will not be forgotten. The curriculum and delivery those pupils need will be delivered in the best way we possibly can. Any opening for Year 10 and 12 will have to have time factored into it for teachers to be able to continue to address the needs of our younger students. All of this will be made clear at the start of Term 6.

Thank you for all the feedback from the assemblies last week and we will run more in the new term as a way of staying in touch and providing more information. I would also like to mention once again the support we have had from Waitrose to help us stay open for the children of Key Workers, – they continue to provide all the food for these children at no cost and it really is such a vital contribution and hugely appreciated.

Please do continue to stay engaged with us and we appreciate hearing from you through the covid-19@stjohns.excalibur.org.uk email. We also continue to keep up to date our dedicated area on the school website which can be found at: <https://www.stjohns.excalibur.org.uk/latest-covid-19-information/>. The Twitter feed continues to be a very useful way of staying in touch with what St John's are doing in the community, so please follow that and re-tweet if you wish.



Please remember that we are not open next week, and we are not going to be setting work for the students to do over the break. The vast majority of the students have been relentlessly working on their work set and the Year 10 and 12 students have engaged very positively with their exams. They and the staff all deserve a break and I hope that everyone remains both safe and well. I will be back in touch at the start of Term 6 or earlier if I need to be.

With kindest regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ian Tucker'. The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Ian Tucker
Principal