

Dear Parents/Carers

I hope you and your family are keeping well and have the opportunity to enjoy some time together and relax over the coming half term holiday – I know myself and the IGS staff are very much looking forward to a break, where the online timetable will now cease for a week as normal during holiday time.

I must admit that I can't quite believe that my communication today contains some of the same messages that I wrote to you about 7 weeks ago, as we then headed in to the Easter break: knowing that remote learning was definitely going to continue for at least the next few weeks after the holiday, but not sure for exactly how long...

What we do now believe is almost certain, is that Years 7-9 will not be returning to school at all before the summer holidays, and the prospects of Years 10 and 12 being able to come in for any extended amount of time is looking more unlikely. There is indeed now a growing possibility that I may need to include some of these same messages about September when I send my end of summer term communication to you all in July. But, we will all know more I'm sure in the coming days and weeks, so let's not dwell on that too much for now!

As you will see, there is an awful lot of information in this email, so my apologies for the length, but I hope you will agree that all are important updates worth sharing with you.

### **Partial Re-opening to Years 10 and 12**

The government has still not issued any further guidance to secondary schools about the possible partial re-opening to Years 10 and 12 and we now await the analysis and any subsequent government announcements that will come out following the publication today of SAGE's scientific evidence, on which the government's re-opening of schools' strategy was based.

As I said above, we are not sure what the next few weeks will have in store, but at IGS we have been planning for the possibility of Years 10 and 12 returning for some 'face to face' contact after half term and I am now in a position to share with you our emerging plans for this, should we get government guidance and clarity about moving ahead with this in the coming days.

At this stage I must stress that our plans are very much draft and subject to change, and will need to account for any changes in health and safety and/or social distancing guidance that comes out, as well as staff availability and of course student uptake in our offer.

Attached is a summary of some of the slides that I have shared this week at IGS and I hope they give you a clear picture of what our current plans look like, including the critical importance of the accompanying, robust risk assessments.

### **[Survey for Parents of Years 10 and 12](#)**

If you do have a child in either of these year groups I would ask you to please read the attached slides in detail to gain an understanding of the proposals we are presenting to you, before then responding to our [survey](#) by **9am on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> May**. Please complete one [survey](#) for every child in these year groups.

Some of the key principles to highlight are:

- Our intention to take a phased approach from w/c June 8<sup>th</sup> at the absolute earliest, with no additional Y10/12 students on site w/c June 1<sup>st</sup>
- Our intention to split year groups and classes into small groups, which for many will mean more than halving the class size
- Our intention to retain 2m strict social distancing for all in-school groups / classes
- Our intention to ensure that no classroom is used by a different group of students without a full clean being done between sessions
- Our desire to offer subject specialist support to students when in school – though this cannot be guaranteed to be with their normal class teacher

### **Review of Remote Learning**

As you will be aware from my email last week, we have been reviewing our remote learning provision over the last few weeks, with a view to enhancing our offer to all students after half term.

We are fortunate that our school systems, such as the use of ipads and Showbie were already embedded practice for both staff and students when we closed our doors to most students on the 20th March, with many expectations and protocols already set up and ready to go. Now that school closures look set to continue for some time however, we have recognised the need to adapt and extend our provision further.

### **'Live' Lessons**

From w/c 1<sup>st</sup> June, we have therefore revised our expectations and protocols regarding the use of Microsoft Teams, to enable all students to take part in 'live' sessions with their teachers. Students in all year groups will now experience a mixture of regular live sessions (not always full lessons) via Microsoft Teams in all subjects, alongside work set on Showbie or other electronic platforms as before.

This may be a full lesson or part of a lesson depending on the focus of the session, which could take the form of consolidation of prior knowledge, receiving verbal feedback and checking understanding or introducing new content and will take place. **From half term, students will therefore now have a 'live' aspect to their learning at least every 3-4 lessons in every subject.**

### **Daily Timetable**

It is now more important than ever therefore, that students follow their normal timetable each day to ensure they can attend these lessons unless there are genuine and unavoidable reasons that they cannot. In this instance, they should communicate this to their teacher. Student guidance on how to take part in Teams live lessons has been sent to students and is attached for your information.

For Years 10 and 12 we are hoping that they will be able to experience some genuine live lessons in school after half term, but if this is not possible then the same expectations will apply for those year groups too.

For Year 12, and possibly other year groups, given the potentially conflicting demands on teachers' time where they may now also be required to deliver subject specialist sessions to Year 10 and / or Year 12 in school outside *their* normal weekly timetable, as well as still be part of the ongoing in-school rota for the children of critical workers and vulnerable children on any

given day, there may need to be some live sessions held outside of normal school hours. This will always be organised in consultation with students.

### Feedback

In terms of teacher feedback, **students will also now receive some form of feedback from their teacher in all subjects, every 3-4 lessons.** Please be aware that **the form of feedback will vary depending on the type of work submitted and the nature of the subject.** For example, the feedback may take the form of a voice note on Showbie, written comments or indeed whole class verbal feedback during a live lesson. Again, more information about the various forms of feedback and how this may look on Showbie is on the attached student update.

### Assessment

More formal assessment will continue in line with the normal departmental policy and schedule, however, we recognise the need for assessment to be adapted to be suitable for the online environment and to avoid causing any anxieties to students. The purpose of any assessment for KS3 therefore, will be to allow the teacher to monitor progress, address strengths and to deal with any misconceptions. For Years 10 and 12 the principles are the same, though we are now looking to build in assessment opportunities later next half term for these year groups to be able to gauge their stage of learning and any gaps in knowledge that have formed at that point to inform our planning for next steps and September, as students progress into their GCSE and A Level examination year.

### SEN Update

Our SEN team continue to support students both in school and remotely and have asked me to remind you that should your son or daughter have additional needs and require some extra advice or support, or if you have any questions you want to ask, then they can be reached at:

[inclusivelearnign@ilkleygs.co.uk](mailto:inclusivelearnign@ilkleygs.co.uk)

### 1 to 1 'Live' Tutor Meetings

As we have been conducting a review of our remote learning provision with staff, we are also now wanting to take the opportunity to check in personally with students about how things have been going for them. **Form tutors will therefore be getting in touch with all students in Years 7-10 and Year 12 after half term to arrange a 'live', 10-minute Teams meeting during the first week back.**

The focus of these meetings will include checking on general welfare, discussing online engagement with work so far and identifying how we can support further given each child's individual circumstances

In order to enable these conversations to happen, **we will be suspending the normal timetable on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> and Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> June when class teachers will not be available online to respond to queries.** Class teachers will however, contact students on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> or Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> June to point them in the direction of work to be completed over these two days, when 'normal' lessons will not be running. This will not necessarily be new work or a specific task but instead is likely to include catch-up activities, consolidation of previous work, or extension or enrichment tasks.

It is important that students make themselves available at the allotted time and have Teams open on their device in order to accept a call from the tutor. If as parents you would like to join this brief meeting then you are more than welcome to do so (though please do help the tutors stick to their 10-minute slot as they will have 30 calls to get through!).

Please note, that the meeting will have a pastoral focus with the form tutor and will not be a discussion about individual subjects, though tutors will be able to talk through some informal feedback they have received from subject teachers about general engagement (not academic progress) with online learning over the past few weeks. This will hopefully allow clear actions for either school or the student to be agreed moving forward from the meeting.

### **Celebration of Students' Work & Messages from Heads of Year**

We have all been very impressed with the effort, resilience and independence that the vast majority of our students have demonstrated over the past few weeks, whilst adjusting to a completely new way of working. Much of the fantastic work produced - academic and extra-curricular - has been celebrated by Heads of Year on Twitter and the school YouTube channel, but we also have a short compilation of some of this work, as well as messages from Heads of Year available to see on the school YouTube channel [here](#). Thank you, Mr Khalil for putting this together!

If you aren't following us on Twitter, the PE team have also uploaded the 'IGS Big Dance 2020' - just follow @IlkleyGrammarSchoolPE.

### **Year 10 Parents' Evening – Moved to September**

Given that we had to cancel this event a few weeks back and there is little prospect of us being able to hold it before the summer, we have taken the decision to hold 2 parents evening in Year 11 next year, with the first taking place in September or as soon as possible after that.

### **Year 7 Parents' Evening – Subject Feedback Day**

Due to us also having had to cancel the Year 7 Parents' Evening, we are taking the opportunity on our planned INSET Day on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> July to ask all Year 7 subject teachers to provide you with feedback about your son or daughter's progress this year. Given that we expect social distancing to still be in place then, this will not be able to happen in person and so instead, teachers will be providing their 'report' either by email, via an audio note on Showbie or another online method. More details on this to follow.

### **Trips and Visits Survey / Refunds**

Thank you for completing the survey regarding the cancellation of future trips and visits including Challenge and Celebration week. We have now begun processing refund requests and want to take the opportunity to thank you in advance for bearing with us through this process.

### **Further Resources and Ideas for Half Term**

We understand that staying busy for students can be even more challenging at the moment, particularly during the school holidays, so we have updated the Coronavirus Support and Resources section of the school website [here](#), with a variety of activities to help keep students entertained - from podcasts and keep fit to arts and crafts. There is also an academic support section should students want to complete further school work or look for extra guidance on a topic.

Well – it's been a mammoth email to you this week, but I hope you have found it informative and useful. Please do complete the [survey](#) if you are a Year 10 or 12 parent, once you've had chance to look through the proposal attached.

Many thanks as always for your ongoing support and if you have any questions about anything above, then please get in touch via the usual methods and we will do our best to respond as quickly as possible.

Have a good week – I'll be in touch again soon.

Kind regards,

**Helen Williams**