

Our Ref: SST/HBr

Date: Monday 18th May 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians,

I am writing to all parents and guardians in response to some questions that have been raised following my letter last week detailing the phased return of The Duston School, as per the government's guidelines. I really do appreciate the questions and concerns that have been raised. However, due to the speed that we are having to work at to ensure that the school is ready to open on the 8th June there simply isn't the time to respond to every email and query individually.

I would like to point the following out to all parents and guardians:

- We have elected to open the school on the 8th June to pupils in EYFS, Year 1, Year 10 and 12 as the guidance issued by the Department for Education is not statutory. We have chosen this date, and not the 1st June, due to the volume of planning and preparation that is required so we can mitigate as many health and safety risks as possible.
- The school will be issuing an explanation video to all parents, guardians and pupils to watch prior to the 8th June which will explain how to enter the school, behavioural expectations, social distancing measures, the use of hand sanitisers, the one-way system we will have in place and uniform expectations.
- There will be a separate and detailed letter for Primary Phase parents this week, issuing more detailed and primary specific instructions.
- There have been questions around how safe will my child be and could my child bring the virus home. In short, we are following a directive by the government to widen the number of pupils accessing the school. Whilst we will put into place all the measures that we can the school cannot guarantee that pupils will be physically distanced from one another and the staff all of the time; we cannot guarantee that one pupil may not touch another pupil and we cannot state that the school will remain Covid-19 free and that no one will contract the virus. We will act in accordance with all of the health and safety advice and guidance that has been issued to schools.
- Should pupil numbers be lower than expected we will continue to offer the approach as outlined in last week's letter. We have also opted to undertake a rota system as this will assist us in mitigating as many health and safety risks as possible. As a school we also have to continue to offer support to those pupils in Year 2, 3, 4,5,7,8 and 9.

I fully appreciate that you may have very serious and real concerns about the risk to your son/daughter. As a school we are following all government guidance and we have undertaken a thorough planning process to mitigate as many risks as we possibly can. I do understand and respect, however, that the wellbeing and safety of your son/daughter is of paramount importance to you. Therefore, the school respects that you may choose to keep your son or daughter at home. Please rest assured that in line with the government's guidance we will not be fining parents if their child does not attend the school.

To help us plan and prepare for opening our doors more widely on the 8th June it would be helpful for us to know your intention in terms of sending your son or daughter back to school. Can I please ask that you email the school at office@thedustonschool.org by **Thursday 21st May 2020** if you do not wish your child to return to school. Otherwise an assumption will be made that your child will be returning.

Yours faithfully,



Mr Strickland
Principal

Mr S Strickland – BA (Hons), MA, NPQH
Principal

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