



Wednesday 20th May 2020

Dear Parents, Carers and Students,

I hope that you are fit and well on this lovely summer's day. I am writing to you regarding arrangements for a proposed return to school for Y10 students in line with other schools within The Challenge Academy Trust. To begin with, we are all very much looking forward to seeing our Y10 students, in whatever form it takes, over the coming weeks and months. Also let me also reassure other parents and students that we will remain fully committed to our online curriculum and care offer for Years 7,8 and 9.

The Government expectation is that: *"secondary schools, sixth form, and further education colleges ... begin some face to face support with year 10 and 12 pupils, although we do not expect these pupils to return on a full-time basis at this stage"* <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/reopening-schools-and-other-educational-settings-from-1-june>

As you can see, the idea is that we give "face to face support" but not on a full-time basis at this point. Also, the government has made it clear that the gradual reopening of schools will only take place providing their 5 key tests justify the changes at that time. Please be advised that our proposals are subject to change based on the latest government guidance and parents and carers will be updated prior to any changes being made. The Government is due to make a further announcement of May 28th after which we hope to provide more definitive guidance. **However, the earliest date in Warrington that some groups of students can attend school will be from 8th June.** If this goes ahead Y10 students will return gradually over a period of weeks.

For the time being, parents, will need to decide whether to follow government advice or not to allow your child to return to school. Irrespective of this, **any students who are classed as clinically extremely vulnerable, due to pre-existing medical conditions, or students who live with someone who is clinically extremely vulnerable should not return to school for the time being.** Any parents who decide not to send their child back to school until September will not receive any penalty or fine.

Students in Year 10 will be phased in gradually and initially may be asked to come in to school for some health and safety induction and familiarisation with new routines. There may be some initial sessions with pupils on a 1 to 1 basis or in small groups and we will then work towards formal teaching of small groups in line with government guidance. We will put measures in place to encourage students to remember to keep their distance from each other. Students will also not be able to share resources or equipment, nor will they be able to play games or sports that involve sharing any equipment or contact.

There will be changes to the start and end of the school day to stagger timings to enable the two-metre social distancing. Times will be confirmed with parents when they are finalised. Any breaks or lunch times will also be staggered. In order to continue to provide a safe learning environment for our students, we will be gradually increasing the numbers of students attending school while it remains safe to do so. It is thought that by returning students gradually, we can initially reduce the number of students in classrooms compared to normal and it will allow us to put protective measures in place to reduce risks.

The government recognises the need for social distancing and therefore additional measures will be put in place to try to minimise the risks of transmission, including:

- frequent hand cleaning, good respiratory hygiene practices and regular cleaning of all areas in school
- minimising contact and mixing by students being put into small groups

We are also conducting health and safety checks in all schools, in keeping with joint union guidance. Whilst we will put in place a range of control measures to minimise risks, this will not mean that risks can be removed altogether and the decision about your own child's attendance will be up to you. Online work will still be provided for those students who do not attend. We have been working closely within the Trust and more widely with other secondary schools and the Local Authority regarding this next phase and I attach [here](#) a letter on behalf of Matt Smith, Cabinet Member, Children's Services. Finally, please stay safe and healthy and enjoy the sun if you can!

Regards

Tim Long