



# Brine Leas School

An Academy

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21<sup>st</sup> May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

You will, no doubt, have seen lots of national discussion about the reopening of schools and you will know from the communications that you have received from us separately that we are actively planning behind the scenes so that we can welcome our students and staff back to our schools. We wanted to let you know that throughout this process, we have been in regular communication and that we have been working in close partnership to share ideas and strategies so that whichever high school the students of Nantwich and beyond attend, they will be able to return to a safe environment at both schools.

The Government guidelines currently expect students in years 10 and 12 to be the first year groups to return to school in some way. They are going to publish more guidelines on the logistics of that soon, but we do not know when. The Local Authority has also said that Cheshire East schools will not broaden their opening beyond the students who belong to key workers or are vulnerable until 15<sup>th</sup> June. Their letter to schools says:

*We are asking that all education settings across Cheshire East follow this advice. We will continue to listen and monitor the situation and reserve judgement to issue revised advice if evidence suggests this is needed.*

*Covid-19 has brought with it stress, uncertainty and anxiety for us all. We need to make sure any return to early years settings, schools and colleges is safe for children's physical and emotional well-being. All schools need to ensure they have in place their risk assessment and have put in place all the necessary changes to policy, practice and physical environment with clear briefings and communication for staff, parents and children. We therefore recommend that from 1 June schools take 2 weeks to ensure they are confident with the arrangements and for staff to be familiar with new working practices.*

They have taken that decision so that the learning environments can be prepared effectively. The Governors in both schools have supported this and will continue to review the situation as new guidelines are published. Currently, they are saying that June 15<sup>th</sup> is the earliest date for wider opening.

We are dealing with a very complex situation where information changes daily and sometimes hourly so our joint planning might change. At the moment, we are planning the following:

Weeks beginning 1<sup>st</sup> June and 8<sup>th</sup> June: Staff reorientation, training and planning of the recovery curriculum.

Week beginning 15<sup>th</sup> June: Year 10 reorientation and 'face to face' contact.

Week beginning 22<sup>nd</sup> June: Year 12 reorientation and 'face to face' contact.

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Throughout this time, we will continue to provide online learning for all students. Both schools are working on improving our on- line learning capacity via Microsoft Teams. More details about this will be given by each school separately.

The Government have not yet given any guidelines on the likely return of students in years 7-9 but as soon as we receive this, we will plan together again to try and ensure the best possible provision that they deserve.

There is nothing that we wouldn't give to have our schools return to normal, but we are both reluctantly pragmatic about this. We know that this is not likely to happen for many months. Government decisions will be guided by the Science and we will be guided by the Government. Whatever happens, we will do everything that we can to support our students. We will write to you again on 5<sup>th</sup> June with an update as hopefully the new guidance will be out by then.

Yours sincerely,

*Jeannette E. Walker*

Jeannette E. Walker  
Headteacher at Malbank

*David Cole*

David Cole  
Headteacher at Brine Leas