

Brine Leas School

Headteacher's Update for Y12 and Y13 Students



8th June 2020

Dear Year 12 and Year 13 students,

It has been a challenging week to keep up with all the developments regarding the national and regional situation regarding COVID-19. At present, we are still working on a partial phased reopening for Years 10 and 12 from the 15th June, with no more than one quarter of those students on site at any one time. This is in direct obedience of the national guidance issued nearly two weeks ago. These plans have been approved by the Academy Trust and the Local Governing Board.

The local situation is such that many Local Authorities in the North West have already declared that no students will return to school before 22nd June at the earliest due to their Directors of Public Health making a risk assessment on the most recent rate of infection, R. Our Local Authority (Cheshire East) are expected to make an announcement on this in the first half of next week. If they determine a later phased opening date than the 15th June, then we will follow their guidance and suggested dates. This situation is very dynamic, and I will update you as soon after a decision is made as possible.

Year 12 will hopefully return to BL6 on the 15th June, but this is currently for one meeting with a teacher per fortnight as per the official guidance. It is entirely down to student/parent choice to accept the invite to attend when it is sent out later this week. You cannot turn up on any other day, than that offered. Pastoral support, wellbeing and remote learning support will be offered in these sessions, but as you would expect it will be a very different site that you will return to. There will be many limitations on entry to the site and movement around the site. Hygiene standards will be high and in line with national guidance. While we await the guidance from the Local Authority and Government on this date, we continue to plan for it and will be in touch midweek with details of the sessions and expectations if we are able to do so. If the plan has changed we will update you accordingly. You will therefore also continue to have remote learning for the near future, but hopefully blended with some in school sessions. For BL6, this is now mostly based around Microsoft Teams and is supplemented by the opportunity to talk to a teacher directly on Zoom clinics. Teams also allow students to communicate with their teacher and submit work, as well as giving us the platform to upload some lessons for each subject, which is now taking place. We have already communicated information about the expectations on students from the school which is also on the website.

We are still supporting anyone in Year 13, regardless of their intended destination. Our transition materials for those intending on progressing into Higher Education have been shared and are available on the website. There is information on the website and some shared by email, explaining our offer and for any that are unsure about their chosen destination or have changed their mind they should contact the school/sixth form for advice. The centre assessed grades that we have to do in the absence of public examinations have been completed or are about to be so (each examination board has different deadlines).

I need to let you know what the latest outlook is for the school and sixth form from September 2020 onwards. While much of this information is based on guidance that hasn't yet been published or risk assessments and plans that work on the latest guidance it is potentially subject to considerable change. Based on this, I thought it was worthwhile sharing that latest thinking with

you, but it these are as yet unconfirmed. For Year 13 students, employers and Higher Education providers will no doubt have many significant changes too, but they will communicate these with you directly. Rest assured though that the same number of Higher Education places will be available as was planned before COVID-19 (if not more), so your intended destination after BL6 should still be available.

It is clear that there will be some adjustments to the dates, styles or content of the GCSE and A Level examinations next summer. There is much speculation in the press and debate in the Department for Education about this, but there are currently no confirmed plans. It is also highly unlikely that unless there is a vaccine and/or a dramatic change in the guidance from the Government, that school will return to normal in September. It would seem that it is most likely that there will be a mixture of in school sessions and remote learning for a number of months, but like you, I hope this isn't for an extended period of time.

While I know that for many of you, including both myself and my staff, the current situation is disappointing, the situation is beyond our control and we are working hard to support all of you in the best way we can achieve. I eagerly await the day that school and sixth form returns to normal, but this is a considerable amount of time in the future based on the latest, but unconfirmed, information. Residentials and trips for the next academic year have already been cancelled by many providers and hosts and it would seem that this, or alternatives, will be indicative of many of the activities that we normally provide outside of the classroom throughout the next academic year, including results days, open evenings/days, parents evenings and school performances. I hope that you continue to stay safe and well.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Cole', written in a cursive style.

David Cole
Headteacher