



BEDFORD
FREE SCHOOL

www.bedfordfreeschool.co.uk

22nd May 2020

Information about the wider opening of BFS for Y10

Dear parents / carers

Following the government's announcement on Sunday 10th May 2020 about the potential wider opening of schools, secondary schools were asked to start to prepare plans for some 'face-to-face' support for pupils in Year 10. This was indicated to be no earlier than Monday 1st June 2020 and is subject to the government making a formal final decision when it reviews whether its 5 tests are met, using insights from SAGE, including transmission rates, in the next week.

Over the last two weeks school leaders and staff at BFS have worked tirelessly to prepare comprehensive plans, including adapted timetables for pupils and wide-ranging measures to ensure that social-distancing can be maintained at all times. At the forefront of our planning has been the commitment to prioritising the safety of all.

I am confident in the plans that we have produced, and that as a school with high expectations, impeccable behaviour from pupils and carefully thought-out routines we are able to minimise the risk to pupils, families and staff.

However, it's worth reiterating that our world of education is inextricably linked to wider issues around public health. Whilst we can reduce the risks we can't eliminate all risk. As of yet, the government has understandably not yet released their guidance for secondary schools and in the absence of this we need to be cautious in when and how we might proceed. We await a clearer steer from the government on what level of physical return to school is envisaged for Year 10 across the country so we can ensure our plans match their intentions and we are able to play our part in the national effort.

Therefore, in consultation with leaders at BFS, the Executive Team at Advantage Schools, governors and trustees we will wait until after the government announces further guidance to secondary schools, we anticipate over May half-term. When further guidance is issued we will consider, amend if necessary and then publish our plans. At the very earliest we believe this could be from the 8th June. We will keep you updated and communicate more details as soon as we can.

In the meantime, our dedicated teachers and support staff will continue to provide extensive work for pupils using our remote learning platforms. Until further notice pupils in Year 10 should continue to follow their remote learning timetables. Yesterday the government issued some helpful guidance with advice for parents and carers on how to support the home learning of secondary school children (year 7 to 11). This can be found here:

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<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/help-secondary-school-children-continue-their-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

As per my newsletter to all BFS families we continue to be open full-time from 1st June for childcare for vulnerable pupils and for pupils whose parents' work is essential in the fight against COVID-19. You can request places in this childcare by emailing keyworker@advantageschools.co.uk.

I want to thank you for your continued support. We are truly appreciative of the efforts that families are making in these challenging times to support their children and their learning at home.

Keep safe and stay well.

Yours sincerely,

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

Tim Blake
Principal