Dear Parent,

As you will have seen in the media, secondary schools are being asked to re-open in a careful, phased way to Year 10 and Year 12 students this half term. We are very aware of the difficulties the extended lockdown is causing for our families. We are concerned about the potential damage it is doing to students’ education and the possible mental health risks alongside this. We want to help now by gradually returning GCSE and A-Level students to school in a safe way.

The government have taken this decision because of the critical importance of GCSE and A-Level students now having some face-to-face contact with their teachers to supplement what they should be doing every day at home.

This is a general letter to all parents in this year group outlining howArk St Alban’s intends to implement this guidance. You will receive a personalised text message explain what specific day we want to invite your child to attend.

Throughout this half term we are continuing to set virtual school activities which students should follow, along with regular feedback and pastoral contact.

We are also introducing supplementary sessions for all Year 10 and Year 12 students at school. These will help consolidate and extend what students are doing through virtual school activities. These sessions will give students a chance to ask questions and receive feedback on their work, as well as motivate them and help lift their spirits.

Every student will be invited to 4 hours of supplementary sessions each week on the condition that they maintain exemplary behaviour, follow all rules and meet our expectations relating to keeping themselves and each other safe. These will be in groups of no more than 15 students, taking place in larger classrooms or halls.

This is a new, limited provision, with safety coming first in line with the latest guidance:

- Students are to be assigned into one of five morning sessions, taking place on separate days.
- Students will be kept in classes of no more than 15 at all times. Students cannot mix at all.
- Rigid social distancing and other infection prevention measures (handwashing, cleaning, no shared resources etc) are in place. Sessions will take place in large spaces which allow for 2m distancing, and which are sanitised between groups.
- There will be structured, staggered and safe breaktime provision each day. There will be no lunches – students should come in, complete their morning sessions, then go home.
- Students will be provided with their own resources which they bring with them to every session and must not share.

If any student develops symptoms of COVID-19 they need to isolate and ideally be tested. Following an isolation period of 14 days or a negative test they can return. A positive test means the whole of their group will need to isolate for 7 days.
**Week beginning 15th June**

Students should arrive between 10.30am and 10.45am on their allocated day. You will receive a personalised text message explaining what specific day we want to invite your child to attend. Students should leave site and go straight home between 12.45pm and 1.00pm.

**Week beginning 22nd June**

Students should arrive between 08.15am and 08.30am on their allocated day. Students should leave site and go straight home between 12.45pm and 1.00pm.

We respect that parents will be best placed to determine if their child should return to school at this point. Government scientific advice, in line with countries such as Germany, France and Denmark, considers it safe for a child to return to school.

However, we appreciate there may be other factors affecting a parents’ decision (e.g. the health of other family members). As such, children are encouraged not compelled to return, and the virtual school will remain in place for all students, both those attending and those at home.

In addition to the text message explaining which specific days your child will personally be invited to, I will also be asking a member of my team to call you personally in the coming days to discuss any questions you may have. You can of course email questions or concerns at this point to your child’s Head of Year.

Yours faithfully,

Mark Dalton