

4 June 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you are safe and well?

Covid-19 update - Plans for widening access for Years 10 & 11 at Danesgate

Following my recent communications, I am writing to let you know of our response and plans for widening access to years 10 as outlined by the Government in their announcement on 24th May.

Our aim is to provide **additional support for students** which will be in line with Government guidance that states:

'We are asking Secondary Schools to offer some face-to-face support to supplement the remote education of year 10 and year 12 students (Years 10 & 11 for Alternative provision schools), which should remain the predominant mode of education during this term for students in these year groups'

When will our Secondary Schools widen access to Years 10?

We are currently working with families in order to ascertain whether it is as safe, or safer to have students attend for some time at school. Key workers have been liaising with homes regarding this.

The Government's expectation is that whole year groups should not be present on site at the same time. As a consequence our school will be operating rota systems with adapted timings of the school day.

Children of key workers and vulnerable students will continue to be able to attend school as they do currently.

What about Year 11?

We are currently working with families of Year 11 students in order to discuss what support we can offer. Much of the work regarding Year 11 students will focus upon supporting transitions to the next stage and may include some face-to-face time as part of this. A team will be working under the guidance of Phil Taylor, (Local Authority Learning and Work Advising Team) in order to support smooth transitions to post-16 offers.

Does my child have to come to school?

We sincerely hope that every family who has children in these year groups will feel comfortable with the measures we have in place (see below). However, the complexity of the last few months means that we will have some children and families who cannot take up places due to shielding or may feel uncertain at this time. The government has clarified that students who do not attend will not be penalised at this time.

What control measures will be put in place to ensure my child's safety?

Working alongside national advice, CYC and various external health and safety bodies, our school has produced a risk assessment process. Danesgate has used this to guide their detailed plans.

Current government guidance states:

- carrying out a risk assessment before opening to more children and young people - the assessment should directly address risks associated with coronavirus (COVID-19) so that sensible measures can be put in place to minimise those risks for children, young people and staff
- making sure that children and young people do not attend if they or a member of their household has symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19)
- promoting regular hand washing for 20 seconds with running water and soap or use of sanitiser and ensuring good respiratory hygiene by promoting the catch it, bin it, kill it approach
- cleaning more frequently to get rid of the virus on frequently touched surfaces, such as door handles, handrails, tabletops, play equipment and toys
- minimising contact through smaller classes or group sizes and altering the environment as much as possible, such as changing the layout of classrooms
- reducing mixing between groups through timetable changes, such as staggered break times or by introducing staggered drop-off and collection times

We have made provision for additional cleaning and will also provide hand washing and other control measures, including staff using PPE – face masks, gloves and aprons when working student-facing. We will continue to review and enhance these according to need.

Danesgate is practising social distancing in line with the measures the government is asking everyone to adopt in public and in workplaces, including keeping students 2 metres apart from each in classrooms. This is likely to mean classes are smaller than usual. This may, however, vary due to individual student and subject circumstances. Mixing between different groups of students will be kept to a minimum as will mixing on arrival and for breaks and departure.

What about other year groups?

For any children not attending school, we will continue to maintain our distance learning offer and where possible run this in parallel with onsite provision. However, please understand that our revised provision will see *many* more staff working on a daily basis onsite and there *may* be less capacity to create online content.

Again thank you for your support at this uncertain and difficult time.

Yours faithfully,



Mark Richardson
Headteacher.