



# Alderman White School

A member of The White Hills Park Trust

22<sup>nd</sup> May 2020

Dear Parents,

## ***Together Apart***

I hope you have had a good week and enjoyed the return to better weather.

Thank you so much to all the students and parents who took the time on Wednesday to say thank you to a teacher or member of school staff – it really was appreciated.

I hope that our Mental Health Awareness Week activities focusing on the theme of kindness have been an opportunity for everyone in our school community to focus on their own and others wellbeing. We are living through incredibly challenging times and we must all make sure that we are kind to ourselves and others. Thank you to all those students who have shared photos representing kindness.

Our Year 7 reports are going to be published within the next few days. Having had to postpone of Year 7 Parents Evening in March we were keen to ensure that parents received feedback from their children's subject teachers, and we hope that this will be of some use despite the unusual circumstances.

Thank you to all the parents who attended our second remote Parent Forum this week and to all those of you who have provided feedback outside of this process. When we established our Stay at Home School model, I never imagined that it would be in place for so long. It has been really helpful reflecting and evaluating and gathering feedback from staff, students and parents this week so that we can celebrate our progress and achievements, and consider how we can make our Stay at Home School even more successful in the next half term.

I know that our students are really missing their friends and peers, and many are missing teachers, structure and routine – and their school dinners! I have emailed our students this week to let them know that we are thinking of them, to remind them that by staying at home they really are helping to save lives, and that once we are able to return to school we will prioritise the things that they are missing the most.

## **Response to the Plan to Re-Open Schools:**

We are still awaiting guidance from the government about when secondary schools can begin to offer some on-site provision for Year 10 students to support their remote learning. Yesterday I received this information from the Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL) who have been meeting regularly with the Department for Education: "Further discussion with the Department for Education this afternoon leads us to advise you to rule out any students in those year groups (Year 10 and 12) returning immediately after half-term. Bear in mind that this is an issue of public health – wanting to ensure that groups of students are not mixing widely in the community. Great caution is therefore necessary, and we would recommend waiting until after half-term to see what the government has finally proposed, and then we will respond." As a Trust we have decided to heed this advice and await further guidance after half term before setting the date when we will be able to begin on-site provision for Year 10.

While we are still not able to provide any further information about the timescale for re-opening school to more students, please be assured that we are working on developing a rigorous plan to ensure that the site is as safe as it can possibly be for staff and students. This will of course require the co-operation and support of the whole school community and I hugely appreciate the offers of help from parents, which have included advice and support with accessing important supplies of items such as hand sanitiser, and offers of volunteering support.

Whilst we really miss all of our students and can't wait to begin welcoming them back on site, our absolute priority has to be the health and safety of our whole community. Our first on-site provision will be the opportunity for students to have a short small group session with their tutor. This will enable students to reconnect with each other, staff and the school site and help to support their remote learning by encouraging them and identifying and addressing barriers to remote learning.

### **Priorities for Summer 2:**

Our main priority is to provide the best possible Stay at Home school curriculum, learning and pastoral support and enrichment that we can for all of our students. In the next half term:

- *We want to ensure that students can feel part of our school community by ensuring all students have access to a weekly video conferencing tutor session, and live chat or video conferencing sessions in as many google classrooms as possible, and get regular feedback about their work.*
- *We will be sharing the best practice in running google classrooms to ensure that they are as accessible and useful to students as possible.*
- *We will be focusing on ensuring that all students feel challenged.*
- *We will launch an exciting project linked to a national competition to celebrate the contribution of our national BAME community [www.100greatblackbritons.co.uk/index.html](http://www.100greatblackbritons.co.uk/index.html)*

Google classroom and live lessons on Google Meet or MS Teams do provide the best opportunity for students to interact with their teachers and get feedback about their work, and we will be supporting students who are still getting used to this way of working rather than providing paper-based work.

I hope that half term will provide a break from Stay at Home School, an opportunity to focus on hobbies, family time and relaxation (and maybe some revision for Year 10). I hope also it provides an opportunity to reflect on what has gone well this half term and to agree any changes to expectations that will support a good routine in the second part of the term – there are 8 weeks of it!

### **Year 10 Assessments:**

As we are unable to run the Year 10 Progress Exams this term we are instead running assessments from Monday 8<sup>th</sup> – Friday 19<sup>th</sup> June on google classroom. We hope all of our Year 10 students will be preparing for these assessments and will do their very best. It is also of course an expectation that they are completed with integrity as they cannot be invigilated in the usual way. The assessments will be used to help teachers and students understand what they know and can do, and to plan the curriculum and interventions going forward. They will help inform predicted grades but will not be used in isolation. Please remember that every other Year 10 student in the country is in the same position and that post-16 providers will be mindful of the disruption in planning their application process for 2021.

### **Supervision:**

Please see my separate email with regard to our Supervision provision, sent earlier this week. After half term we have more students attending supervision on site. As a result, we require a completed Supervision Agreement document for any student attending supervision. It is essential that students attending our supervision understand the importance of following our supervision expectations. Thank you to all the parents who have opted not to use this provision as their child is able to stay safely at home. This reduces the risks for all students and staff on site, and allows more staff to focus more of their time on providing Stay at Home provision which can reach more students.

**Half term:**

I hope you and your family have a relaxing half term break. Staff will not be setting any additional work for students to do during the half term period, running live sessions or responding to student and parent queries. However, if you need to contact our safeguarding team, or to speak to someone urgently during half term, please contact [studentsupport@whptrust.org](mailto:studentsupport@whptrust.org).

Yours faithfully,

Mrs A Mellors

Headteacher