

June 12th 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

Another week goes by and there is still a great deal of press speculation and mixed messages about the wider re-opening of schools. There is certainly a lot of discussion but no clarity about what might happen in September and there has been nothing decided yet by the Government about qualifications in 2021 - which I know is leaving a lot of students and staff feeling anxious. We really want our young people back in school and we hope that will be as soon as possible.

Year 10

On Monday 15th June the Local Authority will review its guidance on secondary schools reopening for Year 10. If they give the go ahead we will open to Year 10 from June 22nd, following the plan that was sent out to Parents of Year 10 last week. (English sets 1a and 1b on Monday 22nd; English sets 1c and 2a on Tuesday 23rd; English sets 2b and 2c on Wednesday 24th; and English sets 2d, 3a and 3b on Thursday 25th). Thank you to virtually all Year 10 parents and carers who responded to the online form and it is good to see that we will have almost 70% of Year 10 coming back.

Year 11

Yesterday we submitted all the centre assessed grades for current Year 11 to the three exam boards we use. Staff have spent a great deal of time in recent weeks working remotely as faculties to review work, assessments and mock exams to provide grades that are as accurate as possible for every student in every subject. They then had to put all students in to a rank order in every subject which is not as easy as it sounds. All these grades were discussed and moderated by senior staff. We now have to wait until August 20th for the actual results. It is really important to say that what comes back will not be the same as what we have submitted. The Exam Boards and Ofqual have been very clear that they will look at all the centre assessed grades nationally and use statistical models to make adjustments so that results are in line with previous cohorts nationally. This means that in every school in the country, grades submitted by the school could be raised or lowered by the exam boards. This is also why we are not allowed to discuss the grades we have submitted with parents or students.

We still have to decide how results will be distributed on August 20th but if social distancing is still in place, as we presume it will be, then results may have to be sent electronically via email.

The official school leaving date for Year 11 is the final Friday in June. We have however been informed that the DfE will continue to fund free school meal vouchers for Year 11 students up until the end of term.

Remote Learning

For now, remote learning remains the norm for all our students and we know that they are coping with this at different levels. Some are finding it stressful to organise themselves while others seem to be coping well. This is also a new situation for staff and we are also learning as we go along. We have learned over the weeks the importance of not overburdening students with remote work and the importance of saying that not everything needs to be finished- you can only do what you can do. I would want to stress the importance of students contacting staff for help. I have also asked staff more recently to be specific in reminding students where work has been set to cover several lessons. Marking and feedback cannot be the same as it is in school but I know staff are only too willing to provide feedback if work is sent in. What has been sent back has been quite varied and so I have asked staff that we are more specific in saying how work can be returned.

As the school closure situation carries on nationally we will try to develop new ways of engaging with learning especially for Year 9 and 10 with some recorded and live sessions. Today we tried the first live lesson in Maths to check out the system and safeguarding concerns and what we learned will be shared with all faculties. I would ask your patience though as this is new for most staff (as it is in many schools), there are limits on what staff can be asked to record from home (and most are still working at home) and uploading from home can be problematic. As I have said before I am also very conscious of the many students who are having to share devices or do not have access to a device and so would be further disadvantaged if lessons were live. However we have to look for creative solutions.

Book Bank

We have been overwhelmed by the amount of books that have been donated for our book bank, thank you! Thanks to your generous donations, we now have over 400 books which is amazing.

Students have been emailing in for books which are then collected on Wednesdays and students in school are enjoying choosing, reading and going home with a book. We are continuing to collect books so please feel free to donate any unwanted or finished books for others to read. Donated books can be dropped off at school between 9.00-14.00 Monday - Friday - there is a box available outside Reception.

The attached books are available for students or younger brothers and sisters to borrow. Please email Ms Fry at cfry@carrhill.lancs.sch.uk with the title of the book you would like to borrow and the name of the student.

Please continue to take care

Best wishes

Andrew Waller