



Longdendale

H I G H S C H O O L

19th May 2020

Dear Families,

I hope you are all safe and well, and thank you for your continuing efforts to support your children with their learning at home during these uncertain times. As I shared in my last update, tutors and learning leaders have started contacting parents and learners for a general keeping in touch chat and to check that learners are able to access the work being set. The staff are welcoming the opportunity to liaise with you and your child and answer any questions that you may have. Thank you for all of the positive comments that you have shared with the school in these calls and the huge amount of work you are doing to support your child with home learning at this difficult time. The senior leadership team have also been contacting our Year 9 learners and their families to support with their decisions regarding the option subjects they wish to study from September, and again we appreciate all of your support with this. Our learners continue to make us exceptionally proud with how well they have adapted to this new way of working, and we have been extremely impressed with the work they are sending back to their teachers. Please see the Twitter feed on our website for just some examples of some of the fantastic work our learners are producing. Please remember that if you or your child have any specific questions relating to the work that has been set, then please contact the subject teacher via email in the first instance, and if you have any overall suggestions or comments get in contact via the following email: homelearning@lhs.aspireplus.org.uk.

You will all no doubt be aware of the confusion and uncertainty that currently surrounds the recent announcements by the government regarding the phased re-opening of schools, and I know that this will be a source of additional worry and anxiety for some of you. I therefore wanted to write to you to update you regarding the current position in relation to the recent government announcements regarding this and some of the planning already taking place in school to support this. Over the past few days, the government has published lots of guidance about this and the guidance for parents can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/reopening-schools-and-other-educational-settings-from-1-june>

The current guidance is aimed mainly at primary schools, and there is very limited information regarding secondary schools at this time. What we do know already is that the initial plans for learners returning to school are only for Year 10 at the moment. The guidance for this states that 'secondary schools, sixth form, and further education colleges to begin some face to face support with Year 10 and 12 pupils, although we do not expect these pupils to return on a full-time basis at this stage'

Whilst there are currently no national plans for the return of learners in Years 7,8 or 9 at this current time, school continues to remain open for children of critical workers, those children who have an Education, Health Care Plan (EHCP), and those who have an allocated social worker who works with the family. Children of critical workers, and vulnerable children who are already eligible, will continue to be offered a place, regardless of the year group they are in. The definition of critical workers remains unchanged, and can be found here:

Longdendale High School Spring Street, Hollingworth, Hyde, Cheshire, SK14 8LW **Headteacher:** Mrs A. Jones **CEO:** Mr M. Bowler
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<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>

If you believe that your child falls into one of these categories and you would like them to be attending school, please contact us on the following email address before sending your child in to school to confirm your place and to ensure we are able to plan for their attendance in school: keyworkers@lhs.aspireplus.org.uk

Whilst we appreciate that some parents and carers are now being asked to return to work, schools are not unfortunately expected to support the return to school of children whose parents or carers are returning to work during this period unless they are identified as falling into one of the categories outlined above. We will of course update you if this guidance changes.

As a profession school leaders are finding it exceptionally difficult to navigate the directives and guidance we are being sent to understand fully what the next steps will be for us as a school. However, in line with the most recent government announcements we are prioritising providing some form of face to face contact with all of our Year 10 learners. This is to complement and supplement the remote learning they are currently doing. At this stage, it is not expected that this will be all Year 10 learners in school at the same time for full time provision, but we are monitoring the guidance carefully for any further updates on this. We are working closely with the Local Authority who have been extremely supportive in coordinating the approach across the borough. Currently their first priority is supporting primary schools however they are already providing additional support to help us in the planning phase of what partial reopening will look like. At this stage, we will be working in line with the local authority to look to provide some face to face contact for our Year 10 learners from June 8th onwards. The safety and wellbeing of all of our staff and learners is our first and main priority, and I would like to assure you that as a school we will continue to monitor and follow closely all government guidance, and that we will only re-open school more widely when we are confident that all the appropriate and necessary measures are in place in school. To support us with our planning, we will be sending a short survey out to the parents and carers of our Year 10 learners to understand how many learners we will be expecting to return to school in the first instance. We would appreciate your support with returning this so that we are able to ensure sufficient staffing levels and appropriate plans are in place. We will keep you updated with our planning and look to provide a guide for families once this has been finalised.

Year 11 learners are being further supported by the higher education colleges in the borough, who have informed that they are starting to provide work for Year 11 learners directly related to the courses they have applied to study next year. Please visit the school website to access the links or the individual college's webpage.

We fully appreciate and understand that this is a very difficult for some families for a variety of reasons and, if families are experiencing difficulties with emotional wellbeing or have had the sadness and upset of losing a loved one, they can request a call from Mrs Noble, our Mental Health Lead. Mrs Noble may be able to offer support directly or be able to signpost families to the most appropriate support. We would also like to remind you that we have a number of support tips and ideas on the school website and these can be accessed through the pop up box, which appears when you first open up the website. A member of the safeguarding team and a member of the senior leadership

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team are available every day in school if you need any further support or information during this period.

I hope you and your families stay safe and well and if we can be of any further help please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours faithfully,

Andrea Jones
Headteacher

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