



# Biddenham

International School & Sports College

Principal: Mr David Bailey

Head of School: Ms Eleanor Grylls

20<sup>th</sup> May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

## Re: School Update

With much confusing and seemingly conflicting information in the media, we wanted to provide an update about how we are moving things forward at Biddenham. The government has announced that it hopes to allow Year 10 and 12 students to receive some element of face-to-face time with teachers from after half term. The 1<sup>st</sup> June start date is very much aimed at primary schools and for secondary schools to plan to start from this date, not on this date.

It is also important to understand the government will only make the final decision on whether to press ahead with the restarting of schools when it reviews the latest science on 28<sup>th</sup> May, and that if the evidence does not support this decision at that time, it will be delayed. We have many things to consider including staffing, logistics, cleaning and distancing. Ultimately, we need to ensure that our students and staff are kept safe. As soon as we have further details about what our plans might look like, we will let you know. In the meantime we will be conducting surveys with parents/carers and students to inform our planning and improve our distance learning. We would very much appreciate hearing your views.

Since the school closure we have continued to provide support in school for the children of critical workers and those in vulnerable groups. If you are a critical worker or your child is identified as falling within a vulnerable group and you need to access this provision from 1<sup>st</sup> June, please email the school at [enquiries@biddenham.beds.sch.uk](mailto:enquiries@biddenham.beds.sch.uk) or call 01234 342521.

There is no clear date about when other year groups might begin to return to school. We will, of course, continue to operate our distance learning provision through Google classrooms, until students return. Over the course of this closure, we have developed our teaching practices and have produced further online video and audio lessons across all subjects. We continue to adapt and experiment with different approaches, many of which will be in place as we move into next half term. All of our students having chromebooks has given us an advantage for distance learning and we intend to better use the technology we have available as time goes on.

We appreciate and share the concern that many of our parents/carers will have about the lost learning during this time. We know how hard parents/carers are working to support their children to learn from home in this way and also understand that the longer time goes on the more dips in motivation our young people can experience. Most students are engaged with their online learning, and we want every student to benefit from it. Please encourage your children to contact their teachers if they are struggling with any of the work, or are unsure of what to do. If your child is having any issues with accessing work or with chromebooks, please contact us at [enquiries@biddenham.beds.sch.uk](mailto:enquiries@biddenham.beds.sch.uk) including your child's name and year group, or call 01234 342521.

We also know that for our students, the lack of interaction with their teachers and peers may be starting to take its toll. We remain committed to our pastoral care provision and continue to be in touch with many of you regularly and are always contactable should you have any concerns. We would encourage all students to access the assemblies and wellbeing support available through year group Google classrooms, and catch up with the latest school news via the website, Twitter, Instagram and our E-newsletter which is coming out soon.

Thank you for your ongoing support and understanding and we will be in touch again very soon.

Warm regards,

Mr D Bailey  
Principal

Ms E Grylls  
Head of School

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