



Durham School

Co-educational Day & Boarding 3 -18
Confidence for Life

Durham School
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12th May 2020

Dear Parent

Coronavirus Update

I hope that you and your families are well during this difficult time. Following the publication of the various government documents yesterday, I thought I would write to you with an update on how we are tackling the uncertainties and challenges of pupils returning to the site at Durham School. As you will know, the Prime Minister indicated that Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 pupils may return on June 1st, subject to the scientific advice in place at that time. Further information published since indicates that schools could also have some "face-to-face" time with Years 10 and 12, given that pupils in these year groups face public examinations next year. There was no specific mention made of any other pupils and so we await further information on those once the situation regarding the Coronavirus becomes clearer.

Clearly, as ever, our priority is the safety of our pupils and Mrs Harrod will write to Bow parents specifically about how the guidance from the government may be implemented at our school. Much work will need to be done to maintain social distancing as far as possible together with the other necessities for pupils and staff to return safely.

There is less clarity around the safe return of Senior School pupils and we await more information that is likely to emerge later in the week. However, as I write, my advice is that pupils in Years 10 and 12 should be prepared to return to school in some capacity on June 1st. More information on Years 7-9 will be circulated as soon as we have it. Once again, much thought is being given on the safety of pupils and staff who may return.

For those of you who are parents of boarders in Year 10 and 12, we await advice from government and other bodies such as the Boarding Schools Association on how boarders may be able to return safely. Once we have that, we will write with further information.

Given the constraints we are likely to be working under, it is unlikely that Year 11 and 13 pupils will be able to return to the school site this year. We have been giving thought to the program that we will deliver to both year groups and we will write to those parents and pupils with more details shortly. It will involve some consolidation of work done this year as well as preparation for the next stage of their education. It will be delivered online and should prove to be an exciting opportunity for the pupils in those year groups to prepare them for the next stage of their lives.

As you can see, the situation is complex, uncertain and constantly shifting. The impact of the phased return on fees for the term is being discussed by governors and it is our intention that you will receive a letter with more details on this by the end of the week.



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Durham School (1414 - present)



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All Steinway
School

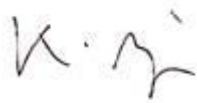
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As you know, we deferred the start of the Summer Term in order to maximise the opportunity for pupils to return to the school site. If the plans above go ahead, some pupils clearly should return on June 1st but it is not clear when all pupils will be able to do so. For those pupils in year groups which do not return to the site on June 1st, term will resume with online learning.

In the light of this, and I appreciate that this is another change, I would propose a small amendment to the term dates as previously notified. I would propose the removal of the suggested "half term" week beginning July 6th to consolidate the term into one block of teaching. Given the final week of the summer term is Activities Week, which it would not be possible to run this year, I would propose cancelling that week of term and finishing on July 31st. These changes would have a minimal impact on teaching for the coming term, but would allow pupils to have a longer break in August. Your feedback on this proposal would be gratefully received and so please indicate if you support the suggested change using the following SurveyMonkey link: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/RSWSBTL>. I would be grateful if you could do this before the end of the week, and I will write to you once again in the light of the feedback received.

Once again, thank you for your support in what are challenging times for the school and for families. I hope that you and your families remain safe.

Best wishes



Kieran McLaughlin
Headmaster
Durham School

