



26th June, 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

Coronavirus update 18

Writing a weekly update for parents every week has become a happy part of my routine over the last three months! So welcome to this Friday's edition; I hope it finds you and your family in good health and spirits.

Partial re-opening

This week we've welcomed over 200 Year 10 and Year 12 students back for a day in school, with attendance running at around 80% in each year-group. It's been great to see them! I hope they have found their day in school useful, not just from the academic point of view, but also just to get back into school and remember what a face-to-face lesson (in one subject) feels like. Speaking to some of the Year 10 boys, I know that not all of them found getting up in time for school especially easy after several months of being able to lie in!

Of course when it's safe to do so, we'd love to offer Year 10 and Year 12 students some face-to-face teaching in other subjects, and to give students in Years 7, 8 and 9 some time in school too. At present the rules around 'bubbles' in school do not allow us to do so, but we're expecting further guidance about re-opening will be published next week – and if it's judged to be safe, we'll see what can be offered for the last week of term (for which we've deliberately not scheduled anything at this point). Watch this space...

2020/2021

I am sure that many parents will be wondering about what arrangements might be in place for September. So are we! We're hoping for more advice from the Government next week, and will naturally share our plans with you as soon as we are able. As ever, our first concern will be the safety of our pupils (and their families), and of our staff.

As I've met the Year 10 and Year 12 students coming onto site this week, I've spoken to many of them about what next year's exams may look like. Again, further details are expected imminently, but I think it is fairly likely that the exam 'season' will run a month later next year – *ie* from mid-June to mid-July, instead of from mid-May to mid-June. I know that families where all the children are in Years 11 and 13 sometimes like to book holidays once the GCSE, BTEC and 'A'-level exams are over; the plain message at this point is **please don't book anything yet** as public exams may well not finish until the end of the summer term in 2021.

Free School Meals

We have received further information about how the Edenred voucher system will work for families entitled to Free School Meals. Eligible families will get six weeks' worth of vouchers (at £15 per child per week), but we cannot ask for any vouchers to be sent out after 14th August. So we'd like to propose that for St Margaret's families, the delivery schedule will be as follows:

- Week beginning Monday 29th June: One voucher as usual
- Week beginning Monday 6th July: One voucher as usual, plus one holiday voucher
- Week beginning Monday 13th July: One voucher as usual, plus one holiday voucher
- Week beginning Monday 20th July: Two holiday vouchers
- Week beginning Monday 27th July: One holiday voucher
- Week beginning Monday 3rd August: One holiday voucher
- From the week beginning Monday 10th August: No further vouchers

Please let me know by 12noon on Wednesday 1st July if you have any comments about this schedule.

Year 9 options

I've nearly completed all the 'phone-calls about Year 9 options! If you're still waiting for a call but would like to get in touch first, please don't hesitate to e-mail me at the usual address: scbrierley@stmargaretsacademy.com

Maths Competition

Just after February half-term I initiated a "room-number Challenge", where a Maths puzzle was posted on the door of each classroom. The challenge related to the room-number – so, for example, the challenge for Room 15 was "*A prism has 15 faces; how many edges does it have?*" – though not all of them were that hard! Students were invited to solve as many as they could and submit their answers to me by Easter – and a small number did (thank you – you'll get at least one prize for an early submission!).

Of course the school closure has meant that most students didn't have the chance to enter, so I'd like to reissue the challenge as a light-hearted Summer Term Maths Competition. A list of the challenges can be found at <https://www.stmargaretsacademy.com/roomnumberchallenge.php>. There'll be at least one (sadly not especially valuable) prize per year-group and everyone (families as well as students!) is invited to enter. Please send your answers by e-mail to the usual address (scbrierley@stmargaretsacademy.com) by **1pm on Wednesday 8th July** and I'll announce the winners in that week's Parents' Update. Good luck!

As usual, the next update is scheduled for next Friday. Thank you to the number of parents who have contacted us over the last few months to let us know they find these updates helpful; as ever, all feedback is welcome – positive and negative! – so do please get in touch if you have any thoughts to share.

With best wishes for a peaceful weekend – and a very happy one for the red half of the city!

Yours faithfully



Stephen Brierley
Principal.