



The Crossley Heath School

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Dear Parent/Carer,

I hope you and your family are well and are managing to navigate the recent changes to restrictions. Certainly, being able to see at least some family members or friends, albeit at a distance, is very welcome.

You may be aware of the latest announcements regarding the wider opening of schools and I am sure that, like me, you have many questions. I write to tell you about Crossley Heath's current position regarding the wider opening of schools to more students. We are very keen to have all students back in school as soon as it is safely possible. The government has said that the priority for secondary schools is to enable some face-to-face contact for Year 12 and Year 10 students. Unfortunately, there has been no further guidance on what that provision should look like, although we are clear that it will not resemble a normal curriculum.

Currently, there is a great deal of uncertainty about the ability of schools to manage social distancing. You will appreciate that this is a challenge in our wonderful but quirky main building. We will have our risk assessments ready after half term but await Department for Education guidance on what provision may look like.

On Tuesday I received a letter from Julie Jenkins, Director of Children and Young People's Services for Calderdale, which detailed Calderdale Council's analysis of the five key tests set by government in preparing for the wider opening of schools. The Council Leader, Lead Member for Children and the Cabinet have taken external legal advice; advice from the Director of Public Health, the Director of Children's Services and considered the evidence of Mr Rahman Chief Scientific Adviser to the Department of Education to the Science and Technology Committee, 13 May 2020. Calderdale Council's view is that, 'The first [of the Government's] two tests have been met: the NHS is able to cope, and the death rate is coming down'. However, the Council's is not assured that the next three tests have been met or will be met by 1st June. Consequently, the Council are advising schools not to open more widely.

I attach the letter from Julie Jenkins for information.

Whilst we do all want our children back in schools as soon as it is safe to do so, I am reassured that Calderdale Council has taken a decisive line and, although as an academy we are not obliged to follow the Council's advice, Crossley Heath will do so in this instance. A number of councils have moved to a similar position and I expect the national picture will develop over the coming days, hopefully towards some clarity and consensus.

We are continuing to plan for wider opening at some point to Year 10 and Year 12, and eventually to all students, and I will continue to update you on developments as we move into the next half term. In the meantime, we will continue to work hard to provide remote learning and pastoral support.

I remind students in Y11, and their parents, that Y11-12 bridging work will be available on the website from 3 June. Students will be contacted directly about how to access this work.

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As we arrive at the end of a full half-term as a 'virtual school', I would like to recognise the efforts of my staff in enabling the children of key workers to attend school, and in providing remote learning and pastoral support for all students. It is a far from ideal situation and we look forward to the time when we can return to a more normal school life. I am very grateful to you, our parents and carers, for your support for your son or daughter's remote learning and for your continuing support for the school. We have a wonderful school community in which you all play a much-appreciated part.

I wish you all a pleasant Bank Holiday and half-term break, and wish Eid Mubarak to those of you celebrating the end of the Holy Month of Ramadan this weekend.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lynnette Cassidy". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'L'.

Lynnette Cassidy
Headteacher