

26 June 2020

Dear Families,

I hope that you are all enjoying the recent warm weather safely, and that you continue to be well during this difficult time. While there is hope of us slowly returning to life as we knew it, we will continue to exercise caution and always place the safety of our community at the heart of all our future decisions.

Next week, I will be meeting with the Executive Board of the Trust to discuss our return in September. What is clear is that students will not return as originally planned on the week commencing 24 August. We are likely to begin a phased return of all students from the week commencing 31 August. However, I will write to you again once these plans have been ratified. Of course, all plans are subject to change in light of the situation with COVID and government guidance. One thing is certain; all our staff cannot wait to get back to working as normal and are looking forward to welcoming all students back to *Dixons Unity*!

Consultation on a change to the school day (Monday only)

We have completed a timetable and curriculum review this year. As part of this, we are reintroducing the subject of Religious Education (RE) to the curriculum for all students. Delivery of RE is a statutory requirement and must be delivered to all students. Recent months have placed us under even more pressure to ensure that we are able to spend time filling the gaps in students' knowledge and skills, allowing them to recover their missed learning and go on to make good progress. As a result of this, we are proposing a change to the school day when we eventually return in September.

The change would be an extra hour of curriculum time **every Monday**. The **change would be permanent** and would mean that **all students would finish school at 3.50pm on a Monday only**. School will start at 8am as normal. **All other days will remain the same and all students will finish at 2.50pm on Tuesdays to Fridays**. There would be no after school enrichment or Year 11 Intervention on a Monday under this model, and detentions would only run for up to an hour after school on Mondays.

The extra hour of curriculum time would allow us to add the statutory requirement to deliver RE, without the need to take any curriculum time from other subjects. We will need all the time we have for the recovery curriculum to be delivered in all other subjects. I hope that you agree this is essential following the disruption to students' education. We will write to you with more details about the delivery of RE in the near future.

In order to listen to the views of our community, I am offering a window of two weeks for you to respond to the proposal. Feedback, comments or suggestions should be emailed to the Operations & Business Manager, Mr Simmons, on jsimmons@dixonsua.com. Please ensure the email is titled *Monday School Day Change Proposal*. The feedback window will close on Friday 10 July at 5pm. I thank you all in advance for your support in ensuring that we can continue our journey to improve the school and continue to offer a better education to our community.

Year 11 Grades and Results Day

We have submitted grades and I have signed declarations to each exam board. We are now waiting on a response from the boards and are planning results day. Please could all Year 11s read the letter from Miss Lawrence about the results day process before using the parents' evening booking system to book a slot for results day itself? If you have not received a letter, please contact Miss Lawrence via email: glawrence@dixonsua.com

Year 10 Sessions in School

Our sessions for Year 10 have been really well attended and successful. Most students seem to be enjoying their return, and teachers have been full of praise for the students' attitudes, levels of engagement and maturity. I would like to thank all of the students who have returned for paying such careful and close attention to the safety



measures in place while also dealing with a strange and unfamiliar situation with such integrity. If you would like to return to school, please contact us to request this and we will hope to have you allocated to a group and back to the academy as quickly as possible.

Working from home

I would also like to thank and congratulate all of the students who have been working from home so brilliantly. Your resilience and dedication to your work gives you a better chance of success in the future and should mean that you have less to do to catch up on your missed learning in September. If anyone is struggling with any aspect of the work being set by teachers, please contact the academy and we will resolve this for you.

If you are struggling with any aspect of life during lockdown, please let us know immediately. We have staff ready and waiting to support and guide you – you are a part of our *Dixons Unity* family and we will be here to support you through any difficulties you may have.

Reports

We previously have not sent written reports home to parents and have instead focussed on students' data, attendance and progress, using parents' evenings as a way of communicating with you about other aspects of your child's life in school. Due to the situation we are facing, we have decided that all families in Year 7 to 10 will have a written report sent home for their child. Tutors have written short reports and these will begin to be posted from 9 July.

Year 6 Transition

We are setting up a Transition section to our website. This will go live on Monday and will contain all of the information we would usually share via our Transition days and evenings. Mr Grayson, Transition Lead, and I will also be aiming to meet virtually with as many students as possible - while they are attending their Primary provision - before the summer.

I will also be filming a video welcome and guide to the academy. This will be on the website before we close for summer.

In the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact the academy if you need anything, or if you have any questions for us. You can contact reception, using the number below, or you can email our Year 6 Transition Leader, Mr Grayson: pgrayson@dixonsua.com

Safeguarding and Child Protection

We are still operating our safeguarding and child protection provision. If you have a concern or issue, please contact the academy safeguarding team, using the details below, ring the academy or contact me directly. We will address serious issues immediately. You can also call Social Services if you have concerns about a child on 0113 2224403 (between 9-5pm).

If you need to report a crime, or have an emergency situation, please contact the Police on 101 (or dial 999 if there is a threat of immediate harm).

Contacting the academy

We have contacted and spoken to every single one of our families over recent weeks. We will continue to do this in the run up to the summer holidays. However, if you need us, we are here to support you. We have supplied well over 150 food parcels and other provisions such as toiletries and baby items. We have worked together with families who needed support with wellbeing. We will continue to do all of this.

If you need our support, please let us know.

if you need to speak to someone, you can call reception during office hours on 0113 2630110. Outside of office hours, please use the following emails to communicate with our teams:



For general enquiries: info@dixonsua.com

Child Protection / Safeguarding / Wellbeing issues:

Ms Rothenburg / Mr Grayson - grothenburg@dixonsua.com / pgrayson@dixonsua.com

Attendance or Curriculum: Ms Burmo-Rothenburg – KBurmo-Rothenburg@dixonsua.com

Serious concerns: Mr Carr – dcarr@dixonsua.com

I hope that you all have a great weekend and that we all can continue to look forward to lockdown restrictions being eased in the coming weeks and months.

Yours sincerely



Danny Carr
Principal

