

Friday 12<sup>th</sup> June, 2020.



# Penketh High School

Dear Parents and Carers,

Can I thank parents for taking the time to complete the Year 10 survey. This has been incredibly important in helping us to plan for the return of Year 10 pupils next week.

We are very much looking forward to welcoming Year 10 back to school. Whilst the guidance issued to schools calls for our plans to make some changes to the way pupils enter the site and provides some limitations for how they can interact in classrooms; pupils will recognise the classroom environments and some of usual routines that they are used to in school.

Safety, of course, remains our key priority as we want to ensure that we do all we can to mitigate any risk to our young people and our staff. We are confident that we can begin the process of wider reopening of school at this time, having sought clear advice and guidance from not only the local authority but also Public Health England. I have attached a joint statement from the Cheshire and Merseyside Directors of Public Health detailing the advice that has been given to schools.

I know that in light of the government's announcement that examinations will go ahead next year, we are all keen to give pupils the best possible chance of being successful and reintegration to school, with less than twelve months until the exams start, is an important first step in ensuring pupils are well prepared to undertake examinations next year.

Our intention over the course of the next five weeks is to support pupils' reintroduction to school, helping them to overcome any anxieties they may have about physically accessing school having been absent for such a long period. Quite naturally pupils will be nervous and probably overwhelmed at the prospect of undertaking exams after significant disruption to the routine and structure that they've been used to for many years. I'm so pleased that we've been able to offer interactive lessons through Teams following our usual school timetable every day and we've seen some exceptional pieces of work being produced by pupils remotely; but we all recognise that this cannot replace classroom learning. It can't replace social interaction or discussion and removes our ability to spot where pupils are struggling with a topic through non-verbal communication within the classroom.

Has the preparation ahead of the start of Year 11 been ideal? Absolutely not, we all recognise that but it's a factor that we've not been able to control. The staff and I are committed to doing the very best by tirelessly working to deliver the best possible provision for the things we can control and an important first step is providing pupils with some face-to-face support. Our pupils are outstanding young people, capable of achieving great things. Now, more than ever, is it crucial that we work together over the course of the next 11 months to ensure that our pupils are well placed to achieve this success.

I look forward to the live information broadcast session this afternoon so that we can address any queries you may have about the arrangements for next week and from the 22<sup>nd</sup> of June.

Yours sincerely,

Mr J Carlin  
Principal.

**PART OF THE CHALLENGE ACADEMY TRUST | NURTURE | CHALLENGE | ACHIEVE**

THE CHALLENGE ACADEMY TRUST C/O PRIESTLEY COLLEGE, LOUSHERS LN, WARRINGTON WA4 6RD. COMPANY NUMBER 10689247

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Principal: Mr J Carlin BA(Hons) NPQH





## Statement regarding the wider opening of TCAT schools

Following the government announcement regarding the wider opening of schools in England, we had planned for a phased reopening for our primary schools from Monday 8<sup>th</sup> June which was in line with the Warrington position. On Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> June we were called to a meeting of the local council, public health and school/academy leaders from across the town. At this meeting the council proposed a one week delay to ensure sufficient information was provided by Cheshire and Merseyside Public Health to justify safe opening to more pupils. We agreed to this delay. At a subsequent meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> June it was agreed that sufficient information has now been provided by Cheshire and Merseyside Public Health to support the wider opening of schools/academies in Warrington from 15<sup>th</sup> June. Consequently we have decided to open TCAT academies from Monday 15<sup>th</sup> June subject to sufficient measures being in place at each academy to address issues raised within local risk assessments which have also been evaluated by the local authority and sampled by trade union colleagues.

The wider opening will be gradual across the primary sector and will include some face to face time with Years 10 and 12 in alignment with the government guidance. Our plans and approach will be reviewed on a weekly basis to reflect changing guidance and to ensure the safety of staff and pupils is under constant review. Our principles and models for wider opening may change as a consequence of this ongoing review.

The joint statement from the Cheshire and Merseyside Directors of Public health which informs this decision is provided below.

### Joint statement from the Cheshire and Merseyside Directors of Public Health on the phased re-opening of schools

#### Statement intended for Cheshire & Merseyside Local Authority Chief Executives

On Friday 5<sup>th</sup> June, a revised calculation of the R value showed a rise for the North West to just above 1. This was calculated by the Cambridge/Public Health England Joint Modelling Team.

In light of this rise, the Cheshire and Merseyside Directors of Public Health (CM DsPH) have considered the phased returning of schools carefully, reviewing the latest available evidence and good practice.



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Taking this evidence into consideration, it is the view of the CM DsPH that where Head Teachers have rightly paused to consider if they should expand the number of children coming back to their school, the CM DsPH would support their decision to now progress their plans for a phased return of Reception, Years 1 and 6 *and face to face contact with Years 10 and 12* if they deem it safe to do so, noting the following:

The R value is just **one factor** that needs to be taken into account with regard to the easing or tightening of lockdown measures. The number of cases and deaths at a local level must be factored into decision-making, which **must also be balanced against the wider impact of lockdown on certain sections of the population.**

The evidence from the North West Scientific and Technical Advisory Cell (STAC) <sup>1</sup> shows very low transmission child to child and child to adult in schools. There is evidence that children of all ages have less severe symptoms than adults if they contract Coronavirus and that younger children are less likely to become unwell if infected with coronavirus.

Schools should also ensure strict adherence to health and safety arrangements such as social distancing and any containment arrangements such as bubbles of staff working together.

In addition, each school should fully understand the “management of a suspected/confirmed case – on site in staff/pupils (as outline in the CM Public Health Supplementary Guidance for Schools during the Covid-19 Pandemic).

Everyone has a role to play in keeping schools and communities safe. The CM DsPH would like to reinforce the message for the general public to adhere closely to the guidance on social distancing, using face coverings where social distancing is not possible, prioritising good hygiene practices, using caution when meeting up with potential contacts.

As part of the NHS ‘Test and Trace’, anyone who is experiencing symptoms should order a test immediately at [www.nhs.uk/coronavirus](http://www.nhs.uk/coronavirus) or call 119 if they have no internet access. If the test is positive, the national contact tracing service will take the necessary actions

Infections and deaths are now at their lowest and everyone has a role to help reduce them further. The CM DsPH will continue to review the latest intelligence and surveillance and update as required.



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