



Charles Darwin School

Operated by the Charles Darwin Academy Trust

Headteacher: Sunil Chotai, BSc

22nd May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Year 10 Face to Face Support Provision

Thank you to all parents/carers who have responded to my letter of 19th May 2020. The rate of response has been good – thank you. I am now able to write to you with a few more details of our proposed provision.

Just to clarify, the government have asked us to put in place some “face to face support” any time between 1st June and the end of July. We are not commencing school on 1st June. I will inform parents of dates as soon as we are clear it is safe to open the school to more children.

As I said in my last letter, you will all probably appreciate that our proposal for the “face to face support” is not a return to “normal schooling”. Unfortunately, it is not yet possible to consider any likelihood of “normal schooling”. It is therefore worth remembering when looking at the details of our plans for partial opening that the bulk of a student’s learning experience going forward, for the foreseeable future, is going to be composed of working remotely. What we can offer in terms of new teaching, even for Years 12 and 10 who will have the opportunity to come into school for some “face to face support”, is going to be minimal.

Consequently, this remote way of working, with class teachers setting work and students working from home is, I anticipate, going to be the norm for some time. Unless, of course, by some miracle a vaccine appears and can be manufactured in vast quantities overnight. It is therefore logical that our plans for “face to face support” with these two year groups should be targeted towards facilitating more effective remote working. This is where there is most to be gained.

We have learned a great deal about remote learning over the last few weeks, what works well with pupils, what does not, how to use ICT effectively and so on. So, our approach to the “face to face support” opportunity will aim to facilitate a better understanding amongst students of how they can learn best in the coming months. What they need to do, what they must be watchful of and how they can best access/undertake the work that teachers set.

There are many considerations to discuss to enable effective remote learning, some are practical, some are about personal learning styles and some are about personal behaviours. There are many factors impacting on a student’s effectiveness with remote learning and they include the following:

1. Being practically skilled to access and participate remotely.
2. Being motivated - self motivation - how can I motivate myself in difficult circumstances?
3. Being organised - with what you need to do, timetable of work, returning completed work if possible etc.

4. Being optimistic - maintaining buoyancy even when the going gets tough.
5. Being proactive - learning things for yourself, being better independent learners.
6. Understanding emotionally that you are not alone. You may be working alone but the whole country of students is experiencing the same thing. Exploring these emotions and understanding them better will help being more motivated.

Our aim will be to equip students to work more effectively away from school and to feel reassured and more confident if they are feeling vulnerable.

The bullet pointed elements of the plan below should be understood in this context. This is what we are trying to focus on and work on with students in the first instance, so that they are better remote learners.

In putting together this plan we have been very mindful of:

1. The need to ensure that only a small number of pupils are in school at any one time so that we can adhere to all the safety requirements.
2. Maintaining social distance at all times.
3. Ensuring excellent hygiene practices in each space, after each use, after each batch of students, to ensure that the risks of cross infection are minimised.

Please be aware that this plan is draft and subject to further government announcements expected next week. Our intention is to hold these sessions in the first two to three weeks of next half term. However we may need to delay the sessions listed if we feel that it is still unsafe to open the school to more children.

The main points of the first stage of our plan are:

Stage 1 Year 10 - dates to be confirmed after half term

Session: A: 8.30-10.00

Session B: 10.30-12.00

Session C: 1.30-3.00

1. Invite Year 10 students into school in groups – one third of a tutor group (about 9 students) at a time. Three tutor groups at a time. So a maximum of 27 students would be in school at any one time split between the three tutors involved.
2. Each group of 9 will report to either the canteen, Dance Studio or Sixth Form Hub where the desks have been laid out 2m apart. Students would engage in activities facilitated by the form tutor which are designed to enable reflection on the successes and challenges of their remote learning thus far and how learning can be improved going forward.
3. The details of the activities are being drafted now. The Year 10 form tutors or stand-in teachers would seek to facilitate the development of understandings that would help with effective remote learning, covering the topics that I listed earlier.
4. We would operate this arrangement 3 times, staggered during the day to cover the entire tutor group, each subgroup of about 27 leaving the site before the next arrives. Using different exit and arrival points
5. We will also hold an assembly in the school hall for each batch of 27 pupils with all the required cleaning and distancing precautions in place.

6. We would need to operate this arrangement for 3 days to cover the entire year group.
7. Entry and exit will be from external doors and managed carefully; observing the 2m rule all the way through. Hands sanitised on entry and floor markings of 2m distancing adhered to strictly during entry and exit to help establish a safe and reassuring atmosphere.
8. Supervised toilet access - ensuring social distancing as far as possible - cleaning of toilets every few minutes.
9. One-way system set-up in school to ensure safe movement in the corridors.

We believe that for this time in school we will be able to adhere to the social distance requirements if students act maturely and they follow our guidelines. If we find that adherence to these guidelines is a problem for an individual, we will ask them to make their way back home immediately.

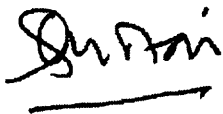
As you can see the organisation has been detailed and we have taken every precaution to enable us to uphold the social distancing requirements, cleaning requirements and other considerations to ensure the safety of the children once in school.

What is still an issue is having confidence that the journey into school for those that use public transport will be safe and hygienic. We would encourage students to where possible walk, come by car or cycle.

As I said in my last letter, I am aware that parents/carers will have serious worries about sending their children back into school under these circumstances. I would like to reassure you that we will do our utmost to ensure safe and medically sound practices. However, the decision to send your children in to school is yours. We will not take action for non-attendance.

If you do have any questions then please do email us on schoolclosure@cdarwin.com and we will try to clarify as far as is possible. I must reinforce again that this programme is subject to change by further government announcements.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sunil Chotai', with a horizontal line underneath it.

Sunil Chotai
Headteacher