

HONITON COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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Principal: Mr Glenn Smith BSc (Hons)



11 May 2020

Dear Parent / Carer

Children returning to school

Many of you will have heard the Prime Minister's address on Sunday 10th May in which he stated that:

"At the earliest by June 1 – after half term – we believe we may be in a position to begin the phased reopening of shops and to get primary pupils back into schools, in stages, beginning with reception, Year 1 and Year 6. Our ambition is that secondary pupils facing exams next year will get at least some time with their teachers before the holidays."

In addition to this announcement The Government's roadmap ([Our Plan to Rebuild](#)) for how and when the UK will adjust its response to the COVID-19 crisis, was released today but provided slightly less, I believe, clarity than we got from Boris on Sunday evening. What follows is the only specific reference to school re-opening (from over 50 pages):

A phased return for early years settings and schools.

Schools should prepare to begin to open for more children from 1 June. The Government expects children to be able to return to early years settings, and for Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 to be back in school in smaller sizes, from this point. This aims to ensure that the youngest children, and those preparing for the transition to secondary school, have maximum time with their teachers. Secondary schools and further education colleges should also prepare to begin some face to face contact with Year 10 and 12 pupils who have key exams next year, in support of their continued remote, home learning. The Government's ambition is for all primary school children to return to school before the summer for a month if feasible, though this will be kept under review. The Department of Education will engage closely with schools and early years providers to develop further detail and guidance on how schools should facilitate this.

Currently, schools will continue to offer places for vulnerable children and those of key workers but we understand that many parents/carers will want to know more about when their children will return to college. Schools across the country will also have heard this news for the first time on Sunday and over the course of the next week or two, schools will be reviewing the detailed guidance government has said it will provide. We will then take any action required to open the college to the year groups identified in a safe way. When we are in a position to do so we will provide information on our website and via email so that you will know exactly when the college will be able to once again offer a place for your children. In the meantime, it would be appreciated if you could avoid contacting us directly.

Interactive sessions – using videoconferencing during lockdown

Last Friday's briefing mentioned the shift from home-learning for consolidation of knowledge and understanding, towards work that begins to cover new learning (as we complete Tranche 3 of the work set, during lockdown, and move into Tranche 4). There has been a lot of debate around the use of videoconferencing to promote progress during lockdown and I would like to reiterate/stress our stance on this mode of delivery. In the ideal world every



student would have access to a laptop/computer and also a good broadband provider. This is certainly not the case in the vast majority of schools in the country, and almost 20% of our students fall into this bracket. Therefore, this can't be the main method of delivery and can only be used very sparingly. Our aim, as I previously stated, is to have teachers contact (perhaps only for 10-20 minutes) with each of their classes at least once per tranche of work provided.

As we embark on this new phase of working I would like to remind students and parents about our updated online Child Protection Policy (Appendix 10, section 7.1 – available from our website), and expectations, especially the following section which provides advice and guidance both for teachers and families - **AND MUST BE OBSERVED BY ALL WHO TAKE PART IN VIDEOCONFERENCING:**

Honiton Community College will ensure any use of **online learning tools** and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

Below are some things to consider when delivering virtual lessons, especially where webcams are involved (BECAUSE OF THE POTENTIAL SAFEGUARDING ISSUES AND PROPER USE OF IT CONSIDERATIONS):

- No 1:1s, groups only, unless as a result of risk assessments confirmed with the Principal. This may for example involve having the parent in the room.
- Staff and children must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household.
- Any computers used should be in appropriate areas, for example, not in bedrooms.
- The live class should be recorded (*by the teacher*) so that if any issues were to arise, the video can be reviewed. *Students MUST NOT record or take screen shots of the sessions for data protection reasons and also to avoid improper use issues arising.*
- Live classes should be kept to a reasonable length of time, or the streaming may prevent the family 'getting on' with their day. *This is why we are recommending short interactive sessions of 10-20 minutes.*
- Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background.
- Staff must only use platforms agreed by school leaders (*ours is Microsoft TEAMS*)
- Staff should record the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.

Your sincerely



Glenn Smith
Principal

