



### The Priory School

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Dear Parents/Carers,

I am currently writing to you whilst watching groups of our students enjoying football practice on the field, whilst also listening to staff teaching a lesson in the classroom above my office. When we started to put our plans together to re-open, this is what we wanted; our school community back, happy and safe.

Thank you for your continued support in getting all pupils back into school safely over the past month. All of us are committed to providing the best education possible for your child, while securing the health and safety of our whole school community. Thank you for continuing to follow public health guidelines and encouraging your children to do the same.

You are already aware of the steps we have put in place to ensure the safe return of all pupils to school. We know that you will be keen to understand the impact that we have had in our first weeks of the term, and what our plans are to ensure all pupils catch up with any missed learning. Also, what will happen if a pupil or groups of pupils are asked to stay at home over the coming months.

#### **Our work so far**

We are currently running a full timetable with all year groups in school and will begin to hold small group extra-curricular activities, after school in the coming weeks. These will be in single year groups only. They will include PE but also Creative Writing, Music and Art. To ensure safety they may well be offered over a rolling programme or in short blocks.

Our Charities activities have started with a focus on the Macmillan coffee morning and a non-uniform day on 25<sup>th</sup> September to raise funds.

We have adapted our House Competition system to meet the current climate. Our PE department rose to the challenge to ensure House Run was not lost and changed the format to deliver it through year groups, in their PE lesson and I will be able to announce the winning House later this week. We are determined to ensure as full an experience of the wider elements of school life, as possible.

Teachers are currently involved in consolidating work missed and assessing the knowledge of their classes, post-lockdown. I have met with all Heads of Department to ensure there are effective catch up plans in place and we will be maximising the wider government funding to enhance these plans. Year 7 have sat a small number of online tests to assess their reading and spelling scores, in the absence of more formal tests at the end of Key stage 2. This will help to support decisions around intervention, catch up and correct pitch of work across their lessons. Year 11 are gearing up for a

round of interim assessments, during the course of next week. This is to give us a clear picture of any gaps but also provides us with another set of formal grades we can call upon if we hit a period of disruption in the middle of mock exams.

### **Uniform**

Thank you for your support with your child's school uniform, they have returned wearing it well. However, the ability to wear their PE uniform to school has led us to consider the appropriateness of the length of the PE skort, for girls. Over the course of this year, ready for September 2021 we will be reviewing our uniform policy in general to ensure it is cost effective for parents and is less focused on a 'girls' and 'boys' approach. Whilst we are not removing the skort immediately, if you do feel it is too short or your daughter has outgrown it, instead of purchasing another I would recommend buying a pair of Priory PE kit Shorts. In the long term, it is most likely we will be removing the skort as an item on the uniform list. Please also note that **plain black** jogging bottoms or leggings can be worn as the colder weather approaches.

### **Student attendance**

Attendance has been very positive given the wider picture people have been experiencing with test and trace, last week's total stood at over 90%. Whilst this is lower than our normal expectation of 96% plus I would like to thank families for following the advice given by NHS test and trace and public health authorities. Please do not send your child into school if they are displaying any of the main, Covid symptoms: high temperature, persistent cough, loss of sense of smell or taste. Please keep the school office up to date about any non-attendance and the reasons around this on a daily basis. If we have to send a child home with symptoms, Claire Wassall our school matron will contact you in the first instance and will give you all the supporting information you need to help you access a test.

### **Work for students self-isolating**

If a child has to self-isolate for 10 days due to having symptoms or 14 days because of family members (or being in close proximity to someone who has tested positive) and they are well enough to complete work, this will be available via Show My Homework. There will be a range of subjects available. The work will follow their normal timetable and reflect the topics being taught in class. The work will be instructional in nature, as their normal classroom teacher will still have their full class in front of them in school.

### **Procedure for any positive cases within school**

So far, we have been incredibly fortunate not to report any positive cases within our staff and student body. In the eventuality we do, I will contact the DfE and the local authority public health team who will direct us to provide information about those within close proximity to the confirmed case. They will risk assess and issue us with the definitive list of groups who need to self-isolate. I need to emphasise that they will be making the decision based on the government guidelines and we must follow their advice at all times. They are available to us 7 days a week and I will communicate with parents as promptly as possible via letter/email to those directly affected and via the school website for wider information.

If a whole year group bubble is unable to attend, schoolwork will be supplemented by remote, interactive learning activities led by their classroom teacher.

### **Procedure in the eventuality of local lockdown – Tier 2**

We have clear contingency plans in place in the eventuality of a local spike in numbers and have a year group rota and timetable all ready to go if Shropshire or Shrewsbury was subject to local government restrictions. This will be a fortnightly rotation with limited year groups on site at any one time. Lessons, which would normally be taught in school will be replaced with remote learning for the period of the rotation where year groups would find themselves at home. These will be led by their normal classroom teacher and will be more interactive than work simply set on Show my Homework.

There will always be full time, on site provision for the children of key workers.

### **Students' presence in the wider community**

Unfortunately, we have had a number of reports of anti-social behaviour about our students, particularly in and around Radbrook and the local Co-op. It always deeply saddens me to hear this as the majority of our young people conduct themselves in an exemplary manner and wear the school uniform with pride. We have made it clear to students that they must socially distance and give way to pedestrians on the paths and pavements, as well as wear masks in shops. We will continue to reinforce these messages through tutor and assembly time. We are working closely with the local Co-op to identify the main offenders. In the meantime, could I ask you to please, reinforce the importance of being aware of how local residents may be feeling and the rules and regulations in place with regard to wearing masks in shops?

I have a sign on my office wall, which reads 'Keep Calm and Carry On' and we will continue to abide by this principle as we navigate our way through this period. I will keep you up to date with any changes which may come over the next few months and more importantly we will try to retain the evident sense and enjoyment and normality our pupils have felt since their return to us.

Yours sincerely



Mrs A Pope  
**Headteacher**