



The Bishop Konstant Catholic Academy Trust

Learning Communities, Inspired by Faith

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Date: 18.05.2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

Re: School Closure Update

I hope that you and your family are well.

Over the past few weeks, as well as ensuring that our pupils' wellbeing and learning is nurtured and supported, we have been planning for how our schools will re-open. The Prime Minister's announcement on Sunday 10 May was useful for us in further developing our plans, and further guidance was issued to schools last week. Plans to reopen schools to pupils in Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6, and to continue to provide places for vulnerable pupils and pupils whose parents are critical workers, is based on the guidance provided by the Department for Education. The target is that all BKCAT schools will open to these year groups on 8th June. This is a conditional plan and is subject to change at any time.

I would like to share principles on which we are proceeding -

- We all wish to see pupils return to school in some fashion as soon as possible, in the same way that we would all like to feel that things are back to normal. However, it remains the case that our single, over-riding criteria for any school opening is safety.
- We will only extend our current opening arrangements if it is clearly safe and practicable for pupils and staff. This depends on there being sufficient staffing levels with arrangements in place for social distancing and other protections. Our planning is based on this principle.
- We will ensure that any extension of our opening arrangements is clearly communicated well in advance so that the way in which the school will operate is shared and understood by all staff, parents, carers and pupils before they return. When the time comes to re-open we will be well-prepared and highly organised, informed by the latest guidance, with community safety and wellbeing at the heart of our approach.
- If we have any doubts about the safety of re-opening or if it is not practical for any school to re-open then the school will remain closed to all except those pupils who are vulnerable or who are the children of key workers.
- We have great sympathy with your concerns around attendance and safety and know the reservations that many parents have about your child/ren returning to school.

At present it appears that the government is working towards some opportunity for Year 10 and Year 12 pupils to have some time in school, prior to the summer break and that they should be prioritised because they are sitting public examinations in 2021. However, it is not yet clear what this contact will mean in practice – we are awaiting further guidance and will interpret this as best we can.



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The High schools are currently planning a virtual transition programme that they will communicate to Year 6 parents and children. We will ensure that transition is an effective and welcoming experience even though it will be happening in very different circumstances using social media and online communication.

All our schools will remain open for the children of key workers and vulnerable pupils during the Spring Bank holiday from Monday 25 May until Friday 5 June.

Over the next few days and weeks we will ensure that you are updated and consulted on our developing plans and that pupils are kept abreast of developments. I know that for many of us the pressure of uncertainty, home learning, illness and other factors is ever-present, so if you wish to discuss any aspect of this with school leaders, please do not hesitate to contact them – they will be very happy to talk to you.

With best wishes to you and your family; I am grateful for your continued support and understanding at this time.

Yours sincerely,

Lesley Fitton
CEO

