



WILLIAM ELLIS SCHOOL  
HIGHGATE ROAD  
LONDON  
NW5 1RN

HEADTEACHER: MR SAM WHITE

TEL: 020 7267 9346

FAX: 020 7284 1274

info@williamellis.camden.sch.uk

Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2020

Dear Parents, Carers and Students,

Firstly, I hope that you and your family are safe and well.

This letter is to give you an outline of our plans for the second half of the summer term.

We are now moving into the third phase of our provision following school closure back in March. In the first phase, immediately after schools closed, we put together what we could to support home learning and made arrangements for maintaining contact with students and their families to support wellbeing and learning. After Easter we moved into the second phase, where we had a more systemised approach to structuring learning, and we provided learning packs for every student to supplement the online programme. After a trial, we put in place a timetable of live lessons for Year 10, these have gone well. Throughout we have had on-site provision, led by Ms Jones, Deputy Head, for children of key workers and for other priority students housed in the Sixth Form Centre, along with students from Parliament Hill School. The numbers attending school have slowly and steadily increased over this period.

### **The wider opening of the school**

Our wish has always been that we could have a greater number of students in school as soon as it was considered safe enough to do so. We anticipated that we would be able to do this in June and July. Before the Government announcement about wider school opening, we were making plans with our fellow LaSWAP schools about how we would do this in a coordinated way, this is especially important as the sixth-form provision in each school contributes to the overall LaSWAP offer.

There has been lots in the media about the wider opening of schools but much of it has caused confusion and anxiety. The Government will decide by 28<sup>th</sup> May whether the wider opening of schools could start from 1<sup>st</sup> June. Regarding secondary schools, the Government stated the following: *We expect that secondary schools and colleges will be able to offer some face to face contact with year 10 and year 12 pupils. This will not be a return to full timetables or pupils back in school or college full time, rather some support to supplement pupils' remote education. In line with implementing protective measures and reducing contacts, schools and colleges should limit the attendance of year 10 and 12 cohort in the setting at any one time and keep students in small groups.*

The senior leadership team and pastoral leaders have been planning our wider opening and have been engaging with the staff about how this can happen. We are completing a careful risk assessment using the advice and guidance available so far. Camden have been particularly helpful in this regard along with the professional associations. However, we are still waiting for secondary school specific guidance from the Department for Education which was expected on 18<sup>th</sup> May but has not yet materialised.

Once we have completed our due diligence, we will know how quickly we can open up the school to more students but now this will not be until 8<sup>th</sup> June at the earliest. We expect to be able to increase numbers gradually and we will be targeting particular Year 10 students to start with.

As the Government have made clear, any time in school is to supplement home learning, not replace it. So, home learning will continue to be the basis for schooling until the end of the academic year.

### **Learning Packs**

As we did at Easter, we have prepared learning packs for every student in Years 7 to 10. These packs contain learning plans for each subject and resources. The learning plans outline week-by-week what should be studied for each subject. Your son may not be able to do everything that is set, what is most important is that he keeps learning. The pack will also include a paper copy of resources and worksheets. These resources and worksheets will match what is set online. We hope that by providing paper copies of resources that it will make accessing learning easier, especially when there is limited or no access to a computer and where there are a number of school age children in the house. Hopefully it might reduce a few arguments! This time we would really like all boys to come and pick their learning packs up from school. It will give the boys a chance to reacquaint themselves with the school and meet a member of staff. Mr Scott, Assistant Head, will be in contact with you about the picking up schedule. If your son is not able to pick up his pack, we will post it home or deliver it ourselves.

### **Recorded and live lessons**

Over the next half term, we will increase our use of live lessons with year groups beyond Year 10. The more we put on the more complicated it becomes to manage. We appreciate that we have many families with siblings in the school and we will need to coordinate live lessons with what is happening with students in school. We will be experimenting with recorded lessons which boys can attend at any time, although recorded lessons do not benefit from teacher-student or student-student interaction.

### **Pastoral care**

Since normal school closed, we've attempted to call every student once a week, we don't always manage this, but it is our aim. I've had a number of emails from parents who have appreciated this regular contact with someone from school along with the weekly newsletter. We plan to trial live form periods with some tutor groups and Mr Lane is going to monitor this. If it works well it may become the main way for us to maintain our pastoral contact with students. Ms Wilson, Director of Sixth is working with Ms Mercier Peart (SPL - Senior Pastoral Leader for Year 11) and Mr Mangham (Head of Year for Year 13 & next year's Year 12) to coordinate the transition work for Year 11 and Year 13 next half term.

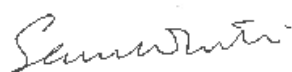
### **Staffing and school leadership**

I am delighted to let you know we have a full complement of staff for September and I am especially excited that we have appointed Ms Ellis as our new food technology teacher, she joins us with many years of successful teaching experience. As you know I leave WES at the end of the academic year and I am pleased to let you know that we've also been busy getting the right leadership appointments in place. I will leave it to Fiona Millar, Chair of Governors, to tell you the details when she writes to you next half term.

### **When we know more about wider school opening we'll be in contact again.**

Finally, my very best wishes to all in our school community and your wider family and friends. Please continue to support each other and show consideration and kindness to others. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you think we can be of support.

Yours faithfully,



Sam White