

Dear Parents and Carers

29th January 2021

Further to the update by Mr Johnson earlier this week and, although these changes were not shared with schools previously, I wanted to update you on the situation at Lacon Childe School.

Schools will not be opening for all students after the half term break as we had hoped. Instead, the 8th March has been identified as a possible start date for the re-opening of schools for more children, other than key worker and vulnerable children. There was no further detail from the P.M or the DfE, other than schools will be given at least 2 weeks' notice before students returned to school.

We do not know therefore whether it will be the full return of all children, if primary schools will re-open first, if selective year groups will return on a phased basis. What I do know and am confident with is that when we get the order to re-open, students at Lacon Childe will be back in school accessing the high-quality education that they deserve.

In the meantime, we will continue to develop online learning for all students. I know that for some this has been exceptionally difficult, and we are trying to remove many of the barriers to learning we have experienced. We have asked our teachers to vary the type and style of learning experience for students as we feel it unhealthy to sit in front of a computer screen for 5+ hours a day. Teachers are asking students to work independently on tasks and present their work throughout the lesson. As a result, our students must take ownership of their learning, a skill and characteristic that is essential if they are to succeed.

To ensure that our students can access this work we have tried to ascertain what devices they have access to. If your child is still trying to use a mobile phone for lessons or is sharing a laptop, please contact your child's year leader or me and I will sort something out. We have over 60 devices being loaned out to families currently and the Free Donate-a-Laptop Scheme means there are more that we can provide. If you would like a free laptop, please contact me. Sadly, at the moment, there is little we can do about broadband connectivity but are hoping that this becomes a priority for rural communities moving forward.

One of the areas that we have had feedback on is the desire for students to participate in their own physical activity sessions. We want to encourage our students to take greater responsibility for their physical health and so will be providing a table of activities for students to do in their own time or during PE lessons. Students will complete each challenge over a two-week period sending photo evidence of them doing so to their PE teacher. This is an ideal way for them to prepare for life after school when their health, fitness and wellbeing is their responsibility. More details of this will follow from the PE Department shortly. PE lessons will also run as per the timetable for those students who just wish to get involved with them.

Consultation on the awarding of GCSE grades concludes today and we are hoping for further clarity before half term. The message to all Year 11 students is to work hard, engage with lessons and produce high quality evidence of your ability so that an accurate and deserved grade can be awarded. You will get the grades your work, effort and commitment deserve, so get the best.

We will be sending out more information to Year 9 students about options for Key Stage 4. I will be delivering an online Key Stage 4 Information Evening soon and will be asking Year 9 parents/carers

to attend one of those sessions so that you are well informed about the process. We will send further details out specifically to Year 9. During Year 9 lessons, subject teachers will be talking to your children about their subject at GCSE. For subjects currently taught at KS4 but not KS3, e.g Child Care, a separate communication will happen.

Please continue to take care and stay healthy,

Darren Reynolds : Headteacher