

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

**Re: Proposed re-opening to Y10 & Y12 students after half term**

Dear Parent / Carer,

Over the last two weeks you may have seen the national debate about the proposed re-opening of schools on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June. Although the government have been very clear that, in a careful way, students in certain year groups should now start to return to schools, some councils (particularly those in the north of England) and the large teaching unions are currently opposing this move.

The uncertainty has placed all schools in a difficult position. Each must make their own decision as to how to respond to this new guidance. At KAA we have debated the issue extensively with our governing body, our local authority, our sponsors and our staff. **We have made a decision to begin to invite Y10 and Y12 back into school from Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> June onwards, to benefit from some supplementary teaching alongside their KAA@Home curriculum.**

Please note that, if further government guidance between now and then directs us to change this policy, we will of course do so and notify you.

In reaching this decision we have considered a number of key factors:

- The government guidance is clear and sets out how schools can keep students and staff safe at school. With only small numbers attending, social distancing is realistic and possible, as are the other precautions we need to take (cleaning, hand-sanitising, not sharing resources etc).
- Different schools have different pressures. At KAA, we have a very large building with a number of double and triple classrooms, plus other large teaching spaces (e.g. the theatre). These make socially distanced lessons easier. We have a range of outdoor space where we can deliver open air sessions. We have a large team of cleaners who can regularly clean shared surfaces during the day. We have significant staffing capacity and many of our teachers are willing and able to come in. In short, it is more feasible for us to take this step now than it is for some other schools.
- Although KAA@Home lessons will still be the main curriculum, we are clear that the supplementary, face-to-face lessons will make a big difference to those Y10 & Y12 who attend, and help them get the most from home learning. Students have been off school for a very long time now, and there is a risk this could damage their long term educational outcomes. These new sessions will build their confidence for the coming end of year exams. With GCSE and A Levels next year, we obviously want to support students as best we can. We also believe getting students out of their homes and back towards normality will have significant mental health benefits.

There are other considerations besides these, for example the fact that as a community school, the majority of our students can walk or cycle and do not have to make long journeys that could risk virus transmission. However, these are the main points behind the decision.

I appreciate parents will have questions. **I have arranged for you to each receive a personal phone call over half term from a member of senior staff to talk this decision through.** Given that next week is half term, this will be a better system than parents reaching out to us directly today or next week. Having said that, you can of course always email us on [info@kaa.org.uk](mailto:info@kaa.org.uk).

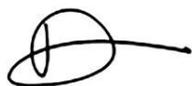
**At this point attendance is encouraged, but not compulsory.** Immediately after the holiday we will write to individuals to explain which supplementary sessions they should come to each week, and the sessions don't begin until Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> June. For any parent who does want their child to attend, we will be asking you to support us in taking virus protection and control very seriously.

We have produced an FAQ document you can read here: <https://kaa.org.uk/students-parents/>.

The full government guidance explaining why the science supports this decision is here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/>.

The governing body will keep this decision under close review. As I said above, further guidance or national developments could alter this course. For now, however, this is the best way we think we can serve our student community.

With best wishes,



**David Benson**  
Principal