



Mary Webb School & Science College, Pontesbury, Shrewsbury, Shropshire SY5 0TG

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30<sup>th</sup> September 2020

Dear parents / carers,

Thank you for your continued support in getting all our students 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 students and staff to school. We know that you will be keen to understand the impact that we have had in our first few weeks of the term, and what our plans are to ensure all students catch up with any missed learning, and what will happen if a student is asked to stay at home over the coming months.

That is why I am writing to you today, in order to keep you fully informed. This letter will also be published openly on our website and is being sent to our governors / trustees.

I also wanted to take this opportunity to let you know about the Ofsted Pilot Interim Visit we were involved in on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> September 2020. This was the first day Ofsted began trialling the format of their new visits, scheduled to begin this week. Ofsted plan to visit 1200 schools during the autumn term, but asked for schools to volunteer to be part of their pilot visits, which is why we were visited.

Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs), Bianka Zemka and Lesley Yates, visited us for the day. I had a telephone conversation with them the day before the visit and they also had access to our school website, policies and our school re-opening risk assessment. Whilst there will be no formal report written following this visit, I am happy to share with you the topics discussed during the visit. The HMIs had meetings with every member of the school's senior leadership team and some middle leaders on the following topics:

- Challenges and barriers we faced in managing the return to full education for all students
- How leaders are ensuring students resume learning the school's curriculum, including plans for the use of remote learning and how gaps in learning are being identified
- How students are settling back into school, including their attendance and behaviour
- How safeguarding was ensured during the lockdown and upon our return

Although this was a pilot visit, inspectors reserved the right to convert to a full inspection. This would have occurred in the event issues around safeguarding and/or leadership and

management emerged. **The HMIs had no concerns about these aspects, nor anything we shared.** I have attached a copy of the letter I received to acknowledge our participation.

All of the following information was shared with the HMIs, and I felt it appropriate to share it with you too.

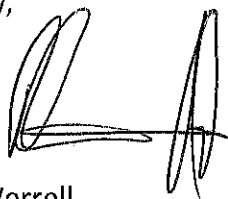
<p><b>School reopenings</b></p>	<p>All year groups have been able to return to their normal school curriculum. Students have continued in their normal classes and the school timetable is very similar to what it was at the start of September 2019.</p> <p>Notable differences to the way the school is running to support our return to a full curriculum include a one-way system and staggered break and lunch times. There has been no significant change to the school day other than this, however we are continually reviewing the situation to see if there is a need to change any aspects of how the school is running.</p> <p>We have been entirely focused on getting the students back in to the routines which support learning in the classroom. In time, we hope to find solutions to reinstate more of our weekly extra-curricular provision after school, and maybe even during break times.</p>
<p><b>Attendance</b></p>	<p>The week before schools were forced to close (on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2020), our whole school attendance figure for the year was 94%. This was marginally lower than our previous year's average of 95.5%, which was slightly above the national figure of 95.1%. Our most recent attendance figures, for the first 2 weeks were very encouraging, with 95.3% attendance being the figure we reported to Ofsted, when they visited us on 16<sup>th</sup> September. We are pleased to report there is very little difference, if any, between the various groups of students within school.</p>
<p><b>Coverage of the curriculum</b></p>	<p>We think it is important that every child has come back to a full curriculum at Mary Webb School and Science College. We believe, as the government stated "returning to school is vital for children's education and for their wellbeing"</p> <p>All students at Mary Webb School and Science College will continue to access the subjects they studied before lockdown and our Year 7 students have the same range of subjects. We believe it is important that your child has access to a broad and balanced curriculum with a range of opportunities and experiences.</p> <p>We at Mary Webb School and Science College want our students to return to their love of learning and be happy and secure in school. We have made the decision to not formally assess or test students in the first few weeks of this half term. However, it is important we ascertain if there are any gaps in learning, so we can then support students accordingly. To do this, at the start of lessons there will be retrieval questions. These will enable staff to gauge student understanding and then act appropriately. For Year 11, at the end of this half term there will be a mock exam in each subject. These examinations will be 'seen papers' or open book. These will not be sat in the hall, they will be in-class assessments.</p>

	<p>The aim of these is to support Year 11 with learning new information, provide them with an opportunity to practice exam technique and to get feedback on their performance. Homework for Year 11 students this half term will be preparation for these assessments.</p> <p>As always reading at Mary Webb School and Science College is a priority. All students should have two books with them at all times and each student will read in form time twice a week. Students who need specific interventions to support their reading have been identified and they continue to be supported. All students have access to myON online library and they can reserve their reading books through the reading cloud which is on RM Unify. Staff at Mary Webb are working hard to continue to develop and introduce opportunities to bring academic reading into each subject.</p> <p>A number of parents and students have expressed their desire to resume team sports in PE and practical lessons in Drama and Music. We understand and appreciate that for some students this is one of your favourite elements of school. We have to follow the guidance and advice given to us from the government and professional associations. But please be assured that these will resume once we know it is appropriate to do so.</p> <p>We have planned our academic year to include as much as it usually does, with Curriculum Days and residential trips still scheduled. It is our hope we are still able to run such trips, however we also appreciate the possibility of having to cancel or postpone such events</p>
<p><b>Remote learning March - July 2020</b></p>	<p>The lockdown period brought with it many challenges for both teachers and learners. However, Mary Webb School and Science College sought to provide opportunities to students in a variety of ways. Student access to remote provision was high and this is reflected in the ability of many of our students to access their learning back in school. Parents were supportive put in place with 85% of parents believe the work their child was set was appropriate in terms of challenge, 78% of parents believe their child was set an appropriate amount of work.</p> <p>Nevertheless, we are a reflective school and we have looked at our provision and sought to find opportunities to see how we can develop our remote provision, if it were needed again. All staff looked at alternative ways of delivering lessons and how technology can be used in a way that is conducive to learning but also allows safeguarding to be paramount. We have learned from the lockdown experience and have let this inform our future planning in this regard.</p>
<p><b>Remote learning in the future</b></p>	<p>This will include using online learning resources such as GCSE Pod, which has tailor-made videos, questions and allows our staff to add their resources and make them bespoke to their classes. This is at both Key Stage 3 and 4. Many staff and departments want to utilise adding voiceovers to PowerPoints, this was trialled by some staff during lockdown and was successful. There may be staff who</p>

	<p>wish to use Microsoft Teams to deliver some lessons. However, we do not expect staff or students to use this. This is based on logistical, educational and safeguarding reasoning. All of this will be in addition to resources already used successfully by subjects- for example Active Learn software in Modern Foreign Languages. Students in Year 11 have been given access to workbooks, revision guides and textbooks. This is to support their learning both at home and in school but will also support their learning in the event of another lockdown. Some subjects in Year 10 have also supplied students with books and workbooks.</p>
<p><b>Mental health and wellbeing</b></p>	<p>The return to school is going to support many students' mental health and well-being. All staff are now supporting the students' resilience to cope with what has happened and look to support with further changes.</p> <p>We have pre-empted the return of our students by adjusted our PSHCE curriculum to ensure mental health lessons are available for all students on their return to school. We have a regularly update mental health section on our website which contains a host of information for students, parents/carers – signposting and offering advice on a broad range of subject areas.</p> <p>CHAT drop in session will begin again very soon, (this is a service offered by the Public Health Nursing service board, no appointment necessary). Students and tutors have the opportunity meet on rotation instead of assembly to talk things over, and raise issues. Youth for Christ also run a casual drop-in session on a Friday lunch time for all year groups to chat.</p> <p>For the past 2 years, we have employed a Mental Health Practitioner for one day each week. We are now employing our Mental Health Practitioner for an additional day, as we want to ensure we have capacity for any future demand. Appointments are booked via Miss Pugh and are available on Mondays and Tuesdays.</p>

Thank you for your support in these challenging times. Please remember to follow both the school's and public health guidance to keep everyone learning safely.

Yours sincerely,



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Headteacher

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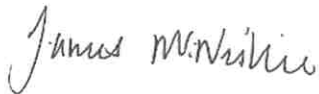
Dear Peter

**Pilot visit at Mary Webb School and Science College on 16 September 2020**

I am writing to express my gratitude for your school's recent participation in a pilot interim visit.

I sincerely appreciate the time you and your staff gave on the day. The conversations and your feedback provided useful information which will help us to shape the visits as the term goes on.

Yours sincerely



**James McNeillie**  
**Acting Regional Director**