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HEADTEACHER Mr J Maher

Dear Parent/Carer

As the final week of the school year approaches, I thought that I would write to all parents and attempt to put the past academic year into context and look forward positively to the new school year in September.

## Reflections on the past year

In the past year we have worked with your support to overcome many challenges. Re-opening in September 2020 with new hygiene measures, risk assessments, 'year bubbles', longer lessons, split lunches and staggered start and finish times was the first major challenge.

Following a very positive start to the term, a spike in cases in November 2020 saw track and trace and the first self-isolation for many students. The second full school closure lockdown in January 2021 caught us on the hop but we were able to offer a full programme of Live lessons on Teams.

Re-opening school in March involved turning the sports hall into a lateral flow test site and compulsory face coverings. Students returned looking happy and school settled into a familiar pattern. We then enjoyed a stable, and COVID free, four months.

During this period, Year 11 and 13 assessments and grading was completed and remote Parents' Evenings were introduced.

## The recent spike in COVID cases

In July we have seen a spike in COVID cases. Inevitably, track and trace has affected student attendance particularly in Year 9 and Year 10. I know that some students have been affected more than once and I am very sorry about that. I can only thank you all for your patience, support and co-operation at this frustrating time.

Compared to schools, locally and nationally, cases are relatively low as a percentage of our student cohort but I understand that is little comfort to those inconvenienced and upset by self isolation. We will be keeping a close eye on the situation over the coming days with the intention of keeping the school fully open until Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> July.

Please, continue to conduct lateral flow tests according to the schedule and remain vigilant to any symptoms in the family. If in any doubt, take a safety first approach. None of us wish to be self-isolating for the first week of the summer holidays.

## LEARNING TO ACHIEVE

## Looking forward

We plan to re-open in September with real purpose and energy by returning to a normal 'pre-pandemic' school day and curriculum with no staggered start to the day.

**School will start for all students at 8.35 am.**  
**Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> September – Year 7 only start school**  
**Monday 6<sup>th</sup> September – All other year groups start school.**

*'In school' lateral flow testing dates will follow in a separate communication to parents who have registered.*

Visit the Ashfield School website [www.ashfield.ttct.co.uk](http://www.ashfield.ttct.co.uk) for the full school calendar and information. Further year group specific communications will follow in August.

## Final Message

Since March 2020 we have greatly appreciated the support of parents in negotiating the many obstacles placed in our path. The Ashfield staff team have worked very hard to keep the school going and to support students and I know that they have appreciated the kind messages of support from parents. We are all very proud of our students who have acted with maturity, cared for each other and cooperated with us fully at all times. They are a credit to you and to the community of Ashfield.

Have a peaceful, restful and relaxing summer and we look forward to working with you again in September.

Thanks



John Maher  
(Head Teacher)