



19 June 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope this letter finds you, your families and friends safe and well. I can't quite believe it's been a fortnight since my last correspondence, that we are just completing our tenth week of remote teaching and learning and only have four school weeks left until the end of this academic year.

It has been a very productive fortnight indeed: all staff have now received their H&S training on site, all Year 10 and 12 students and their parents have had video calls from their tutors in school, our two main toilet blocks in English and Geography have been finished, the classroom refurbishment on the lower level of English has been completed and our classrooms have been rearranged to allow for social distancing and the safe teaching of no more than 12 students in each class. The classroom rearrangement alone has been a mammoth task as no two rooms have identical room layouts in our school and often there is neither rhyme nor reason to the positioning of the external doors! I have certainly envied those leading recently built schools during this time!

Throughout the pandemic I have been proud to remain open for our key workers' children and those who are vulnerable and we have supported increasing numbers of students every day, well above the national average figures. This of course will continue, within our safety limits, as we open our on-site provision more widely to Years 10 and 12 from Monday 22 June 2020, when we will start small group teaching on site for no more than a quarter of each cohort at any one time. We are offering all Year 10 students one day of on-site teaching and learning per week, focusing on English, Maths and Science once students have settled back, reconnected with their teachers and are feeling confident. Year 12 students will receive 2.5 hours of on-site teaching per subject per fortnight for now, with the hope that Government guidance will enable this to extend soon. All Year 10 and 12 parents should have received an email with details of our safety measures, behaviour expectations and our unique provision details for their child by now. Please contact Head of Year 10, Mr Mordue at dmordue@toothillschool.co.uk and Ms Coates, Head of College at pcoates@toothillschool.co.uk as soon as possible, if you have not.

From an organisational perspective we have essentially set up three schools within one, all operating on different schedules, with staggered start and finish times to enable us to manage our student numbers safely. We have timetabled our Year 10 and 12 specialist teams effectively, so that our live lessons on site are best used to support our children and

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supplement their remote learning package, given the proximity of their exams next year, even though the details of which are still unclear. Thank you all for your patience as we have prioritised these students in their return to school, in line with Government expectations. Whilst this has certainly challenged us at this time, I am assured that the depth of planning involved now will stand us in good stead should we have to enact part-time rotas for all students from September.

There is much talk in the media at the moment of gaps in knowledge and learning and the need for catch up because of the Covid-19 closure, which can sound scary to students. I want to reassure you and your children that we have got this all in hand! Our knowledgeable staff and students have always worked hard within our Work Hard; Be Kind ethos and this partnership will prevail. Obviously we, like the children, were thrust into an on-line teaching and learning world suddenly and we have all had to learn to gradually get to grips with this medium. This has not been without its challenges but has continued to evolve alongside our on-site provision and our planning to be ever ready to reopen to some or all students.

From next week, 22 June 2020 all students in Years 7 - 9 will receive a video or a narrated PowerPoint from our subject specific teachers as part of their remote learning provision on a weekly basis for English, Maths, Science and MLF and a fortnightly basis for all other subjects. This weekly provision extends to Year 10 students in the subjects for which they will not receive on-site teaching. Over the past few weeks our trials with this additional element of remote teaching have been positively received, not just in terms of improving engagement and therefore learning but also enhancing connectivity between students and teachers, which both crave so much at this time.

We are also preparing Knowledge Organiser booklets for all Year 7-10 students which will contain the critical knowledge that has underpinned their learning since closure. This is the key knowledge that must be known and remembered if understanding, reasoning and application are to develop. This will be a physical resource, which we believe will help students and parents clarify and consolidate the key knowledge required at this point of each student's curriculum journey and we will post these to students in Years 7 – 9 in early July, with Year 10s collecting theirs on site, when in for school lessons.

Our subject leaders are already amending and tweaking their curricula for each year group for September so that our teaching responds to this period of remote learning appropriately and we will continue to plan with our students at the heart of our decision making, no matter what Covid-19 and Government guidance sends our way. There is no doubt that we will all continue to work very hard to help your child continue to learn well over time and with your support I know we can do this together.

As I mention regularly, your feedback and stories of how your children are making the most of this unusual time keep my spirits high. I love to see their work and hear tales of our students' sense of purpose, their determination and desire to take responsibility, and of course acts of kindness demonstrating integrity and empathy, particularly during these uncertain times. These are all key characteristics of our school ethos that develop a sense of true self-satisfaction, fulfilment and pride; all of which contribute significantly to lifelong positive well-being and self-esteem.

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Please continue to keep in touch with your child's tutor regularly and if you would like additional pastoral support, please do not hesitate to let their tutor know.

Thank you for your continued support and take care.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S Paley', written in a cursive style.

Mrs S Paley
Head of School