



Tuesday, 26<sup>th</sup> May 2020

Dear Parents,

### **Re: General update and important information for all parents**

Please find below a general update and series of notices. I would be grateful if you would read this carefully, and I thank you for your attention.

#### **Half-termly progress-monitoring**

For pupils other than those in years Eleven and the Upper Sixth, half-term progress monitoring grades were published on the Parent Portal on Friday, 22<sup>nd</sup> May. If you have any difficulty in accessing your son's grades, please do not hesitate to contact the school office staff, ideally by email, at [schooloffice@morehouseschool.co.uk](mailto:schooloffice@morehouseschool.co.uk). If you seek guidance on, or wish to query a specific grade, please contact your son's form-tutor in the first instance. However, please remember that your son's teachers and therapists are not expected to address work emails during the school holiday period.

#### **Half-term study**

I am very aware that very many of our pupils – and their parents – have found accessing all lessons through a computer screen, and within an environment very different from school, exhausting. Similarly, the additional workload for your sons' teachers and therapists, of preparing all curriculum and pastoral support to be delivered remotely, has led to significantly increased working hours for many of our staff.

It is vital, for the coming weeks to be sustainable both for students and teachers, that the half-term break affords genuine opportunity to recharge the batteries. Pupils who are not in years Ten or Twelve (Lower Sixth) should therefore not expect holiday work during this four-day half-term week. Pupils in those year groups facing public examinations next academic year are likely to have received instruction for some independent study in their core subjects.

#### **Children of critical workers and vulnerable children arrangements**

Since schools closed nationally on Friday, 20<sup>th</sup> March, More House School has continued to operate an on-site provision, including throughout the Easter holidays, for the children of workers critical to the COVID-19 response where no alternative care arrangements can be made, and for children identified as especially vulnerable, whose care needs cannot be met in the home.

As we move into this new period of the phased reopening of schools, we will continue to provide this on-site provision for eligible children. Parents of such children accessing the school site should, please, read carefully the information contained below, and especially within the section *Important notices for those accessing the school site*.

No such children can be admitted without prior notice and authorisation, since the school's management of risk and safety depends on careful planning of resources, including staffing and facilities. Parents who feel it is necessary that they seek access to this provision should submit an application by email to [schooloffice@morehouseschool.co.uk](mailto:schooloffice@morehouseschool.co.uk).

Moons Hill, Frensham, Farnham, Surrey, GU10 3AP

T: 01252 792303 E: [schooloffice@morehouseschool.co.uk](mailto:schooloffice@morehouseschool.co.uk) W: [www.morehouseschool.co.uk](http://www.morehouseschool.co.uk)

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The email should contain the subject-heading: *Request for on-site provision* and should provide answers to the following:

1. *Does your son have an EHCP (Education, Health and Care plan)?*
2. *Does your son or family currently have an allocated social worker?*
3. *Is either parent or guardian a full-time or part-time key-worker (as identified in published government guidance)?*
4. *Is your son considered to be especially vulnerable in terms of his mental or physical health? If 'yes', please give details.*
5. *Is there any other information you think relevant? Please give brief details. If the information is sensitive or confidential, please make that known in your email, and you will be contacted by a senior member of staff.*

Requests must be submitted to the school office, and by email only – not made through the form-tutor or head of year, and should not be made over the telephone.

The team in charge of risk-assessing pupils for return to school will then consider the request, and contact you to confirm whether or not provision can be made available.

### **Year Six arrangements**

I last wrote to all Year Six pupils' parents on Friday, 15<sup>th</sup> May following the government's announcement about the first stage of the phased reopening of schools. This weekend, the Prime Minister's briefing on Sunday evening confirmed that we are permitted to reopen for Year Six pupils from the 1<sup>st</sup> June.

The school's governors and leadership team have developed a detailed risk-management plan for promoting the safety of pupils and employees attending the school site. This necessitates a change to classes in order to create 'bubbles' of pupils and a teacher, which are isolated as far as possible together and away from other bubbles. This means that for all Year Six pupils, whether they are expecting to attend school or to continue accessing remotely from home, their normal teaching groups will be rearranged. Some teachers will be working in school, and will no longer be involved in the remote-provision. Other teachers will focus solely on the remote-provision for all Year Six classes.

Year Six parents will receive further, more detailed information, this week, including confirmation of whether or not the school has arrangements in place for their son to be on-site, following the online questionnaire submissions received from parents last week. That information should be read in conjunction with the notices given below relating to pupils accessing the school site.

### **Years Ten and Twelve (Lower Sixth) arrangements**

Sunday's announcement by the Prime Minister, and guidance issued to school leaders by the Department for Education, yesterday, state that from the 15<sup>th</sup> June, schools are permitted to invite Year Ten and Year Twelve students onto site. Please note that this cannot be a proper return to school for such year-groups. The government instructions permit up to a quarter of each year group on site in any one day in order to receive 'face-to-face support to supplement the remote education of year 10 and year 12 pupils, which should remain the predominant mode of education during this term for pupils in these year groups ([Guidance for secondary school provision from 15 June 2020](#)).

We are currently exploring approaches to ensure our planning protects pupils, staff and their families, whilst yielding the greatest possible benefit for students. I therefore expect to write again to parents of Year Ten and Year Twelve students once our planning has developed. In the meantime, I am very grateful for your continued understanding, patience and strong support.

## **Year Eleven arrangements**

Year Eleven pupils are not expected to be permitted access to the school site in the near future. At this point in any normal year, they would be partway through sitting their final examinations and assessments for their accredited courses. The school's timetable for Year Eleven pupils would have been collapsed in order to accommodate study-leave and afford focus in school on their remaining examinations, prior to students either

taking a short break from school or engaging in personal development activities, before embarking on more formal Sixth Form preparation.

Now that the government has made clearer their plans for the phased reopening of schools, we are finalising our planning for the support of Year Eleven pupils over the coming second-half of the Trinity term. Year Eleven pupils' parents should therefore expect to receive information specific to their sons' year in the coming days.

## **Other year groups' arrangements**

Pupils in all year groups not permitted by the government to attend school in person will continue to be supported through the school's remote provision, using Microsoft (MS) OneNote to provide parents and their sons with an overview of the week for each subject, and using MS Teams as the primary means of engaging with learning and pastoral support opportunities.

On behalf of the teaching and therapy staff, I wish to thank the parent body for the overwhelming support you have shown us as we have built and implemented our remote-delivery provision. We have received a very large number of messages of positive feedback, offering much encouragement to the staff. We have continued to use your experiences to adapt and develop the provision; it will never serve to equal the experience of pupils within the school's classroom environment, and the difficulties of transcending language-processing and attention difficulties within a virtual environment are all too plain, but I have been impressed by the resilience and determination of our pupils and their teachers to make the very most of the circumstances.

## **Parents' support of live video-lessons**

Supporting your sons' learning from home has placed enormous demands on many of our parents who, like our teaching and therapy staff, are juggling their families and professional commitments alongside many other factors in their lives. As a school we are very mindful of the sacrifices made by parents, and are extremely grateful for the dedication shown by so many parents to providing their sons with the best possible encouragement and support as they engage with the school's remote provision.

We are keen to support parents to develop their effectiveness in assisting their sons' learning, and have used feedback from pupils, parents, teachers and therapists during the first-half of the Trinity term to develop a short document designed to promote the effectiveness of live video lessons. I ask parents to read through the accompanying pdf document, *Parents support of live video lessons*, and thank you for your support in following the guidance. I hope that you find the document helpful.

## **Remote provision in Trinity 2**

A challenge as we move into this phased return of schools is in managing at the same time the competing demands of

- continuing to provide on-site provision for children exempt from the ban on attending school;
- continuing to provide a comprehensive academic, therapeutic and pastoral provision to all pupils not on the school site through remote means; and
- providing full classroom teaching and supervision for an increasing number of pupils permitted to return to school.

It is not possible for a teacher in school with a class of pupils to provide, at the same time, lessons delivered remotely, since each learning experience necessitates a different approach and significant planning. Nevertheless, my colleagues and I are committed to providing the best possible provision for every student, regardless of his circumstances.

As more pupils are afforded access to the school site, so we anticipate likely disruption to our remote-learning platform as subject-specialist teachers are required to attend school on different days, affecting their ability to maintain their current timetable of remote delivery. We intend to minimise such disruption but welcome parents' appreciation of the challenges facing the school's staff, and seek your continued support.

It seems incredible that we are planning for a virtual-approach to Founder's Day. We hope to be able to provide the essential ingredients of awards and retiring officers' valedictory speeches through electronic means – alas, parents are asked, this year, to provide their own fizzy wine and strawberries. Further details will be communicated to you as the second-half of term progresses.

### **Wellbeing page on OneNote**

The Wellbeing team, led by Mrs Ruth Hamond, is developing a series of resources to support further pupils' mental health and wellbeing. They expect to communicate to all parents in the coming days a link to a dedicated Wellbeing OneNote page. I strongly encourage pupils and their families to access this resource, which is expected to be 'live' from Monday, 1<sup>st</sup> June.

### **Important notices for those accessing the school site**

It is imperative that any person accessing the school site, and therefore coming into contact with others in our More House School community, adheres to measures designed and adopted to protect the safety and wellbeing of all of us. The school has in place a detailed risk-assessment and risk-management plan, developed in accordance with government guidance and shared good practice across Surrey and across schools nationwide and beyond. This includes arrangements for effective hygiene, social/physical distancing, and for promoting the mental and physical wellbeing of pupils and staff.

If you, your son or any member of your household travels to the school site during the remainder of the academic year, I ask you to read carefully, and abide by, the following specific notices. Pupils on-site will be supported by their supervising staff to understand and adhere to the rules.

#### - Symptoms

It is important that everyone is aware of the symptoms associated with a possible COVID-19 infection. The government guidance describes the symptoms as:

- a high temperature;
- a new, continuous cough;
- a loss of, or change to, your sense of smell or taste.

Please ensure your son is aware of these symptoms.

#### - Responding to symptoms

If you experience any of the above symptoms, however mild, you must remain at home in isolation, for at least seven days from when the symptoms started. If you live with others and you are the first in your household to have symptoms, then you must stay at home for at least seven days, but all other household members who remain well must stay at home and not leave the house for fourteen days.

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus> provides further guidance and information.

No one who experiences any of the above symptoms, or who has done so in the previous seven days, is permitted to enter the school site.

No one who lives in a household in which any person has experienced any of the above symptoms within the past fourteen days is permitted to enter the school site.

The exception is where an approved test has confirmed no COVID-19 infection, and this information has been shared with the school's surgery staff.

Any person on site who presents with any of the above symptoms will be quarantined immediately, and arrangements made to evacuate them from the site as safely and swiftly as possible. Parents who permit their son to attend school agree to respond immediately to collect their son, in the event that the school's surgery staff identify a potential COVID-19 infection.

- Duty to report

Any person who has recently accessed the school site, and who experiences the above symptoms, or believes they may have come into contact with someone experiencing symptoms (e.g. lives in the same household), has a duty to report this information to the school at the earliest opportunity. Contact can be made with the school's Main Reception, on 01252 792303 or [schooloffice@morehouseschool.co.uk](mailto:schooloffice@morehouseschool.co.uk), or directly with the surgery team at [surgery@morehouseschool.co.uk](mailto:surgery@morehouseschool.co.uk).

- Declaration of pre-existing or underlying medical conditions

Parents must ensure that any pre-existing or underlying medical conditions relating to their son are known to the school's surgery team. Previously declared conditions need not be re-declared.

- Protecting the school community

Any person accessing the school site has a duty to protect all others in the More House School community by ensuring they adhere to all aspects of government guidance and school instruction. This includes guidance relating to social/physical distancing, avoiding unnecessary travel, and avoiding public-transport. Variation from such direction will compromise the safety of others.

Any person accessing the school site has a duty to report to the school any instance in which they may have been subject to increased risk of contracting COVID-19, or transmitting the virus to others.

- Travel

Many parents depend on local authority-provided transport in order for their sons to commute to and from school. It is the responsibility of parents to liaise directly with their local authority's SEND transport department where such arrangements apply.

Transport shared with others outside of your household, and especially public transport, realises additional risk of infection transmission, and should be avoided. Local authorities have in place arrangements for providing families with financial assistance in order to manage their children's own transport during this period, thus avoiding shared taxis and buses.

Parents of pupils expected to attend the school site will be provided with details of their allocated arrival and departure times, which are being staggered in order to minimise the proximity of different 'bubbles' and to reduce the density of parents and drivers congregating in the car-parks.

Drivers are asked to remain in, or at least with their vehicles, and not to walk across the car-park or to the school gate. Such an approach supports the two-metre social distancing measures.

Parents of pupils normally reliant on school-provided transport to and from Farnham railway station, and who require such a service during this summer term, should contact the school office by email well in advance requesting assistance. Such requests will be incorporated into the school's planning, and relevant parents will receive a reply confirming whether or not the service can be provided.

- Parent and visitor access

No visitors, except where vital and pre-arranged, are permitted to enter the school site beyond the car-parks. This rule applies to parents, and I ask that you support the school's infection-control arrangements by remaining with your vehicle if on-site. Please do not venture into any part of the site, for any purpose. The school's Main Reception continues to be staffed during school hours, although access through into the Main Reception area is strictly controlled.

- Pupil equipment

Pupils attending school are now asked to bring to school on their first day, a clearly identifiable pencil-case containing necessary stationery equipment for their personal use. This equipment should then remain at school and not be transported forwards and backwards each day. This approach is designed to prevent the transmission of infection via the sharing of equipment amongst pupils and staff.

This request to provide own, personal equipment applies equally to the children of critical workers and especially vulnerable children currently accessing on-site provision.

Pupils should bring to school their own, named, water-bottles, which should return home each evening for cleaning. The school's normal drinking-fountains are deemed too great a risk of infection transmission, and so are not operational. Arrangements are in place to enable pupils to re-fill their water-bottles if required.

- School lunches

For pupils and staff attending the school site, the school's kitchens will again reopen, in line with government guidance issued to schools. However, pupils will not use the refectory, but will eat their lunch outside or in their designated 'bubble' classroom. The school's catering staff will therefore provide a daily cold lunch, likely to be of a 'packed-lunch' style. Pupils' individual dietary requirements will continue to be met as before.

Pupils may bring to school additional snacks, but are not permitted to share any food or sweets with others. Please remember that the school is a nut-free environment for the protection of pupils with very severe allergies.

- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

The government guidance provides that PPE is not necessary in most school environments and, in some instances, can serve to increase the risk of infection transmission. Our planning therefore does not make provision for distributing PPE to pupils, and does not expect PPE to be worn by pupils.

However, we recognise that some parents and pupils may feel more comfortable wearing a face-mask or gloves. Parents are therefore welcome to provide their son with such a mask or gloves if they so wish. However, it is important that parents ensure their son understands how to wear the equipment so that it is effective, and of the importance of avoiding frequent touching of the face (e.g. to adjust their mask).

### **Updating parental contact information**

Parents are able to view the contact details the school holds in respect of them by visiting the Parent Portal. I ask parents, please, to check these details remain accurate, and to advise the school should any updating be necessary. Parents may find they can update these details themselves and save changes through the Parent Portal. Otherwise, please email [schooloffice@morehouseschool.co.uk](mailto:schooloffice@morehouseschool.co.uk) with any required amendments.

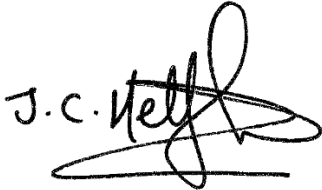
### **School staff**

I have been touched by the volume of messages from parents acknowledging the exceptional efforts exhibited by the staff during this challenging period of weeks. Teaching and therapy staff in particular have been working extreme hours – unsustainably so – to develop online resources, to improve their technology skills, and to support your sons in the best ways possible. I am conscious of the exhaustion experienced by many of my colleagues as this half-term holiday approached, and I have explicitly asked them to ensure they take sufficient advantage of the opportunity to recover, such that they are able to address the demands of the coming five weeks and the changing landscape of our school environment.

Please, therefore, expect that emails sent to teaching and therapy staff, or necessitating their attention, will not be read during their holiday-leave, and until their return to work next week. Thank you for your understanding in this respect.

I wish each of our pupils, and their families, a very enjoyable few days' break, and good health. I continue to look forward to a time – in the not too distant future – when we can again come together as our school community, for the benefit of our boys. Until then, I wish you God's blessing.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J.C. Hetherington'. The signature is stylized with a large, looping flourish at the end.

Mr Jonathan Hetherington BA (Hons) MSc (Ed) QTS  
Headmaster

**Encl.: *Parents' support of live video lessons* pdf document**