

Friday 22nd May 2020

Dear parents and carers,

School Closure: Year 11 and Year 13 Updates

We hope our letter finds you, your child/ren and your families all safe and well. We continue to live in the midst of COVID-19. The difficulties this presents for everyone can't be expressed strongly enough in words. The anxiety we know has been caused by the cancellation of GCSEs and A-Levels this year is something we share. The grading process is well underway and exam boards will soon be carrying out their processes for awarding pupils their grades. A reminder that results days this year are:

Year 13 **Thursday 13th August, 9am.**

Year 11 **Thursday 20th August, 9am.**

I write here to provide an update on the home-learning package that is continuing for pupils as well as important school updates following The Government's announcement that schools will begin the process of reopening for some pupils from June 1st. In so doing I hope to answer many questions I know you will have as the country begins to slowly recover from the lasting effects of COVID-19.

1. Is school reopening for Year 11 and Year 13?

No. I can confirm that, unless advised otherwise by The Government, school will not reopen for Year 11 or Year 13. Whilst we would love nothing more than to welcome all children back before the Summer break, we continue to be guided by The Government and their scientific evidence on the re-opening of schools. We will continue to do our very best to support you and our pupils remotely. We have changed the date of Prom and for the Year 13 leavers' meal to the Autumn so we can say goodbye to pupils properly. Please refer to previous letters on our website for details.

2. Will the Home Learning curriculum continue?

Yes. Home learning will continue from 1st June for the duration of the second half of the Summer Term. Work packs will be released every two weeks, submissions will continue through subject email addresses. For Year 11 this will include pre learning materials for 6th form, a variety of other activities to support pupils in their preparation for KS5 and upcoming milestones such as driving lessons and financial management.

3. Will contact still be made by my child's Form Tutor or Head of House?

Yes. Our regular contact with you will not change. We are committed to staying in touch and providing the excellent pastoral care that DEC is renowned for.

4. How do I provide feedback/ ask questions?

As always, we welcome feedback and questions to help you with home-schooling. The feedback received has been incredibly positive and we are thankful to those who have emailed for taking the time to let us know what is working well. Equally, it is important for us to know if something can be improved even more. To help gather this feedback, in the next contact you receive from your child's Form Tutor, a short questionnaire will be linked so you can answer a few questions and provide comments that will help us refine our package for Year 11 and Year 13. Your feedback is invaluable – please do take a few moments to respond to our questionnaire when it is sent out.

5. Who will be back in school when it reopens?

Once planning for social distancing and all necessary health and safety measures is complete, we are carefully reopening school for Year 10 pupils in small groups and for Year 12 pupils in small groups. In addition, we will remain open for children of Key Workers, pupils with EHCPs and those deemed to be vulnerable.

Parents of Year 10 or Year 12 pupils will receive a separate and more detailed letter outlining the process for their child's face to face in-school support shortly.

Parents who are key workers should continue to contact Mr Ali (w.ali@decschool.co.uk) to organise for pupils to attend.

Parents of children who have EHCPs will receive personal contact from Mr Rackham or a member of the SEND team to organise the return to school process and to provide an overview of the key dates and information needed to provide the best support for EHCP pupils.

6. Are Free School Meal Vouchers continuing?

Yes but not in the holiday. The Edenred National Voucher Scheme remains in place. The most recent release of vouchers was on Monday 11th June and were for £60 per eligible child. Unlike Easter, these vouchers do not cover the half term holiday. Therefore, the vouchers that have been released this week last until 14th June. New vouchers will be released on 15th June.

7. Is 1:1 careers advice and support for college applications available?

Yes. Mrs Fellows (Careers Advisor) is continuing to keep in contact with pupils to ensure they are on track to progress to their chosen KS5 pathway in September. Mr Hanson (Head of 6th Form) is also keeping in regular contact with Year 13 to ensure everything remains on track for their destinations, too.

If you have questions relating to next year for your child, please contact us in the following ways:

Year 11 Destinations – Mrs Fellows: careers@decschool.co.uk

Year 11 General Enquiries – Mr Dunn: m.dunn@decschool.co.uk

Year 13 Destinations and General Enquiries – Mr Hanson: o.hanson@deschool.co.uk

8. What should I know about safeguarding?

In addition to the regular contact we are making with parents and, in some cases also speaking to children, we must remind parents to continue to be alert to the risks. Spending more time online for learning and for fun sadly presents additional risks. We have dealt with a small number of cases already this term of children being targeted online by people who pose a risk to children. Anything that causes you concern either about your own child or another child, you must report it in the usual ways. Further details of our safeguarding advice can be found here:

www.decschool.co.uk/safeguarding

www.decschool.co.uk/parental-platform-guides

www.decschool.co.uk/parental-guides

www.decschool.co.uk/prevent

RESPECT

ASPIRE



Dame Elizabeth
CADBURY
www.decschool.co.uk

BELIEVE

COMMIT

We cannot stress enough the need for parents and carers to monitor social media activity, online gaming and general online activity.

I trust the information here provides a welcome update on the coming weeks for Year 11 and Year 13 parents, carers and pupils.

We are all looking forward to seeing you in the Autumn. In the meantime, take care and stay safe.

Yours sincerely,

Mr M Dunn
Head Teacher



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