

Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2020

Dear parents and carers,

### **School Closure: Year 7, 8 and 9 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. Like you, we have worried about the effect of school closures on our pupils. However their safety has and will remain the top priority. As soon as The Government deem it safe to open for all year groups, we will begin that process. When pupils do return, the superb teachers at DEC will get pupils caught up. Our teachers enable fantastic exam results for pupils and we will continue to work tirelessly to provide your child with the best possible curriculum and chance of success. 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 1<sup>st</sup>. 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 Years 7, 8 and 9?**

No. I can confirm that, unless advised otherwise by The Government, school will not reopen for Year 7, 8 or 9. 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.

#### **2. Will the Home Learning curriculum continue?**

Yes. Home learning will continue from 1<sup>st</sup> 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.

#### **3. How will the Home Learning curriculum be made even better?**

In addition to the work packs which last for two weeks, work will now be organised into individual weeks within each instruction document. These smaller, weekly tasks should help pupils steadily work through all tasks without feeling overwhelmed. To date, we have focussed work packs on review and consolidation of content that had been taught in school before closures were announced.

Home-learning will now also be supplemented by one taught lesson per subject for your child. The new, taught lesson will cover new content to enable your child to move forward in their learning. Your child will hear a subject specialist teacher's voice when they open the PowerPoint and this voice-over will provide teaching of new content. The work packs will then supplement this and some short assessments will be required for submission via Microsoft Forms if the subject does not already have an online marking platform (such as MathsWatch, Active Learn or Seneca). All of this will be linked and thoroughly explained in each subject's instruction sheet.

#### **4. 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.

### 5. 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 work. Your feedback is invaluable – please do take a few moments to respond to our questionnaire when it is sent out.

### 6. 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](mailto: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.

### 7. 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 11<sup>th</sup> 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 14<sup>th</sup> June. New vouchers will be released on 15<sup>th</sup> June.

### 8. Where can I get advice on Home Schooling?

We have now published two Home Learning Newsletters. These have been put together by our teachers to help you with home-schooling. The latest edition can be found here: [www.decschool.co.uk/home-learning-newsletter](http://www.decschool.co.uk/home-learning-newsletter)

There are also a wide range of resources to support parents with Home Schooling on our main website page: [www.decschool.co.uk/working-at-home](http://www.decschool.co.uk/working-at-home)

### 9. 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.

RESPECT

ASPIRE



Dame Elizabeth  
**CADBURY**  
www.decschool.co.uk

BELIEVE

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Further details of our safeguarding advice can be found here:

[www.decschool.co.uk/safeguarding](http://www.decschool.co.uk/safeguarding)

[www.decschool.co.uk/parental-platform-guides](http://www.decschool.co.uk/parental-platform-guides)

[www.decschool.co.uk/parental-guides](http://www.decschool.co.uk/parental-guides)

[www.decschool.co.uk/prevent](http://www.decschool.co.uk/prevent)

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 DEC parents, carers and pupils. We are all looking forward to seeing you soon. In the meantime, take care and stay safe.

Yours sincerely,

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Head Teacher



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