

Dear Parents and Carers

I am writing to update you on our current planning, with more information to follow later today, after a local authority online meeting in which I am involved at the end of the school day to define some of the areas which are less clear. We are working hard to get information to you as soon as we have it.

Staff have worked incredibly hard to keep all yeargroups in college up until now but tomorrow we will need to make some changes.

- Tomorrow morning we will be open to Years 7 and 10 but closed to Years 8, 9 and 11. This is due to additional staffing constraints. We will keep Year 7 in tomorrow as we are aware that they are more likely to need parental supervision if at home, we will keep Year 10 in tomorrow as every extra moment spent during KS4 is vital.
- At lunchtime tomorrow (12:30pm) we will be sending all of our college students home, in every yeargroup, both to ensure that staff are suitably prepared for the online learning which will be in place for all students from Monday and to plan for the additional onsite provision which we have now been asked to make for children of key workers and also children within certain categories of need from next week. Beaver buses have been rescheduled for pickups at 12:30pm for Cosby and Whetstone tomorrow for Years 7 and 10 and we are working to define timings of other pickups. If they have to be later, children on the later pickups will be supervised until picked up.

However, if you are in a key worker role currently, we will supervise your child tomorrow even if they are not due to attend following the information above. From Monday we will have to follow exact definitions of key worker roles to be issued this afternoon to us from government, but uniquely for tomorrow, if you identify yourself within this role and need your child to attend all day if Year 8/9/11, or in the afternoon if Y7 or Y10, you need to advise us today using the email address PAtothePrincipal@thomasestley.org.uk and stating name and yeargroup of child who needs supervision tomorrow contrary to the main yeargroup information above.

The information which we still need to clarify is around the definition of a child of a key worker and the exact definition of vulnerable children, as we have been told that we have to follow exactly the government guidance which will not be issued until later today in terms of children allowed on-site next week onwards. We know that the latter will include children with EHCPs and/or with an assigned social worker, and so we will contact you today if your child falls into either of these categories. Once the definition is clarified this afternoon, we will contact tomorrow morning any other parents of vulnerable children and we will email you later this evening or tomorrow morning to ask you if you fall into the 'key worker family' category and need your child to attend college next week onwards.

We are running assemblies for all of our students today, both to reassure them and to ensure that they are fully aware of the online support and learning available from next week. I have asked them to work with parents and carers to ensure that they are kept busy at home, with a structured day including schoolwork, physical activity, wellbeing and even helping around the house more (so please feel free to remind them!) so that when they return to college they do so fit, healthy and with good physical and emotional wellbeing ready to resume onsite studies.

We share your frustrations around the changes to provision, and we ask that you bear with us as, with a reduced staff, we attempt to follow government advice and try our best to support our children through these national changes and challenges.

The email address talk@thomasestley.org.uk will be available for students who have any concerns and will be manned during college hours over the entire period when the college is closed to most students. There will be careers advice and support available remotely to all year 11 students to ensure that they are not disadvantaged as they move into post 16 provision, and additional information will be shared with parents and carers of year 11 students over the next few days regarding the 'Thomas Estley 2020 Year 11 Promise' which will include some certification, access to careers support, as well as an awards evening and a prom, probably in the Autumn term.

I will be in touch again later today with more information.

Yours sincerely,

Mandi Collins

Principal