

**Wendy Walters** BA (Hons) MA  
Academy Principal

Chatham Grammar  
Rainham Road  
Chatham  
Kent  
ME5 7EH

T : 01634 851262

E : [OfficeCG@universityofkentacademiestrust.org.uk](mailto:OfficeCG@universityofkentacademiestrust.org.uk)

W : [www.chathamgrammar.org.uk](http://www.chathamgrammar.org.uk)

A University of Kent Academies Trust School

18<sup>th</sup> May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

**RE: COVID-19 update**

I am following up my letter from last Monday with the latest information in these ever-moving times. As many of you will be aware the Prime Minister announced last Sunday, (10<sup>th</sup> May), that primary schools could re-open for Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 students from June 1<sup>st</sup>. For secondary schools the cohorts highlighted for some 'face to face' support in Term 6 are Years 10 and 12. Currently there is no mention of other year groups returning before the summer break. This announcement has raised many questions and concerns amongst parents, carers, students and teachers about the feasibility and desirability of this happening at Chatham Grammar and also exactly when it might happen.

I cannot overstate how much the staff and I are looking forward to the day when we can welcome our students back into school and see them all in person again. But these are critical issues, decisions taken now must be the right ones, taken for the right reasons. Our top priority at Chatham Grammar will always be to ensure the safety, health and well-being of your children. To re-open the academy safely, at the right time for our students and staff is more important than responding quickly to a government plan and date.

The decision on whether a school re-opens or not has, ultimately, been left to the discretion of the leadership of each individual school and there is considerable ongoing concern amongst school leaders, our many professional bodies, teaching unions and teaching and ancillary staff about the wisdom both of the timing of this initiative and also the year groups chosen to return to school. They have issued some advice and guidance to schools so far but their discussions and attempts to gain more clarity from the Government on our behalf continue and indeed, representatives from the teaching unions are still meeting with Ministers to clarify the situation.

To support us in finalising plans to ensure we can safely social distance students and staff, if your child is in Years 10 or 12 you will be receiving a separate letter with further details about returning. If your child is in either Year 7,8 or 9 then they will continue with the current remote learning arrangement until further notice.

As you know public exams for Years 11 and 13 were cancelled by the government this year due to the pandemic. Teachers are now required to assess and award grades to students based on an analysis of a range of evidence - from in house test results, from mock results to class work and homework etc. Please note that from Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> May until 11<sup>th</sup> June, a great deal of teachers' time will be taken up calculating these grades, ensuring a full evidence base is in place to substantiate the grades awarded. I am sure you will appreciate that during this time, although digital learning tasks will continue to be set, there may well be more limited feedback from teachers to all students.

In the meantime, please remain safe and well.

Yours sincerely,

Wendy Walters