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Our Ref KD/AB
Your Ref
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Department for Children and
Young People

Parents/ Carers of Bury secondary aged children

Dear Parent/ Carer

OPENING OF BURY SECONDARY SCHOOLS TO MORE PUPILS

I am writing to you about the government announcement about the re-opening of secondary schools to Year 10 and Year 12 pupils.

Since schools closed to most pupils in March, families have had to adjust to home learning whilst many have been working from home and others have been furloughed or have lost their only source of income. This continues to be a very challenging time for many families.

On 28th May the Prime Minister announced that the government's five tests had been met and the decision was to move forward with wider opening of education and childcare settings. Guidance updated on 1st June confirmed that secondary schools were being asked to offer some face-to-face support to supplement remote learning for Year 10 and, where relevant, to Year 12 students.

Since the announcement to re-open schools to more pupils, headteachers, and their staff, have been working tirelessly to plan and prepare to open to the government selected year group/s. I would like to thank the headteachers for undertaking robust risk assessments, taking into account regular government guidance updates. These risk assessments have been approved by each school's Governing Board. However, please be aware that these plans will be kept under constant review and may need to change at short notice. The most important consideration continues to be the safety of pupils and staff.

Each school's risk assessment will be personalised to the school. For example, arrangements may well include different start and finish times and the use of different entrances and exits. Government guidance states that no more than a quarter of each of the selected year group/s can be in school at a time. Group sizes or 'bubbles' can be no more than 15 pupils; the size of the group being limited by classrooms in order to cater for social distancing. Schools will therefore be operating a rota system to ensure that they can offer of face-to-face sessions to all eligible pupils.

The vast majority of Bury schools have remained open, including during school holidays and Bank holidays, in order to provide for children of critical workers and for vulnerable pupils. On government advice schools will remain closed for year groups other than Year 10 and Year 12, with the exception of continuing to provide for children of critical workers and for vulnerable pupils from all year groups.

As our schools open to the selected year groups for face-to-face sessions, teachers will be continuing to offer remote learning to the year groups that are not in school at any time and to the selected year groups when they are not in school. The face-to-face sessions will be used to complement the remote learning. I appreciate that this places an additional pressure on the staffing from the current situation.

Decisions at a school level, based on risk assessment with safety as the overarching priority, will vary and may not be convenient for some parents/ carers. Our schools will need your continuing support as they move into this next phase of re-opening to more pupils, thank you.

Yours sincerely

Karen Dolton .

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