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Dear Parents and Carers

Following the Prime Minister's statement on Sunday, and the subsequent guidance published yesterday evening, you will be aware that at this stage there is no specific date for the majority of students to return to Crofton School, as the Government has chosen to prioritise Years R, 1 and 6. Secondary schools have been asked to begin some face to face support with year 10 students from 1 June 2020, although they are not expected to return on a full-time basis at this stage. We are now beginning the planning for this in line with Government guidance, some of which has yet to be published, and will communicate directly with parents of Year 10 students once we have further details. Please be assured that any plans will be communicated well in advance of any return to school by students, and that the safety of everyone in our school community will be our first priority. The Department for Education has published guidance for Parents and Carers on these changes, which can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/reopening-schools-and-other-educational-settings-from-1-june>

I want to reassure you that our focus remains on providing an ever-improving online learning experience for your child. I would like to take this opportunity to explain a little more about what we have done so far, and our future plans.

When schools closed on 20 March 2020, we ensured all students had work available through our existing 'Show My Homework' platform (recently rebranded as 'Satchel: One'). Our aim was to ensure that all students had work they could access immediately from home, in the simplest way possible.

Since the start of this term, in response to parent feedback and our own evaluations, we have expanded opportunities for online submission of work, teacher feedback and dialogue. In addition, we have tried to address issues around the accessibility of this work in terms of format and level of challenge, as well as providing paper copies where requested. We know this work is not perfect and cannot fully substitute for being in school with teachers and classmates. Likewise, I hope we have been clear that our approach to the completion of this work has been flexible enough to account for the many and varied circumstances you find yourselves in at home. We know how difficult this has been for many of you and hope that where you have approached us for help, this has been useful.

Given that there is no immediate clarity on when the majority of students may return to school, we will now begin to further expand the ways in which we can engage students in online learning. We want to continue keeping this simple and easy to access. There are certainly some additional online learning options that on the surface seem helpful, but we want to avoid anything that will be overly complex for us to implement and for you to get working reliably in your homes. However, we believe there are further measures we can take that balance the accessibility and ease of use needed in your homes, with more engaging and challenging experiences for the students. In particular, we are looking to expand the use of Microsoft Teams as this is a package already integrated with school systems, and accessible to students on desktop and mobile devices through their existing Office 365 log ins. To this end, over the next week we will be trialling some new approaches with small sample groups of students in the hope that, where successful, we can begin to roll these out more universally for the remainder of the term and beyond if necessary. Of course, in addition we will also continue to offer the range of support that has been in place for several weeks now. Please encourage your child to communicate with their teacher via Show My Homework if they have any questions about the work set or would like any feedback.

On site provision continues to be in place for children of key workers and the most vulnerable; pastoral support will continue through tutors and our wider pastoral team, the Free School Meals voucher scheme will be maintained for as long as needed, as will the many other measures we have been taking to ensure our school community continues to function. Crofton School has never been closed, and it is important to remind ourselves of this in any dialogue about 'reopening'!

Further details on all aspects of our response to the Coronavirus can be found in the special section of the school website here: <https://www.croftonschool.co.uk/> and do contact us on: school@croftonschool.co.uk if you require any support. In addition, the most up to date government guidance for parents and carers can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers>

There is still much uncertainty, and I know this is difficult for our students, yourselves and everyone in our school community. However, we do at least now have the first prospect of some return to normality. I will of course be in touch when we have more to share on further steps towards 're-opening' the school and look forward to sharing more details on this and how we will continue to support your child in the coming weeks.

Yours faithfully



Mr S Harrison
Headteacher