



# WALTON HIGH

*Leading Learning*

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Executive Principal: Michelle Currie  
Principal: Sharon Alexander

Chair of Governors: Renu Elston  
Business Manager: Sukh Singh

12 May 2020

Dear Parents

## **Covid-19: Update 13**

### **Year 9 Virtual Parent Consultation Event**

As a school we very much value partnership working with parents and parent consultation meetings are an important part of this. However, with the need to ensure social distancing, this creates a number of challenges.

As a trial, during the week beginning 18 May, there will be an online parent consultation event for Year 9. Letters were sent on 7 May to parents of Year 9 students with details of when and how the sessions will run. As this is the first time we have done anything like this, please bear with us as we all adapt to this different way of working. In order to help improve the process for subsequent year groups, constructive feedback would be very welcome.

As next week many teachers will be engaged in online appointments with parents of children in Year 9, there will be limited opportunity to provide "live" support for students with their work. However, lessons will continue to be set as usual and students will be able to contact Learning Support Assistants if they need help.

### **Student engagement**

We are continuing to monitor students' engagement and are pleased with the commitment the vast majority of students are showing towards their studies. The statistics<sup>1</sup> below illustrate the impressive level of engagement staff continue to have with students not only in relation to their academic progress but also their wellbeing.

Messages	58,873
Meetings Organised	140
Meetings Participated	562
1:1 Calls	1,319
Group Calls	302
Audio Time (Minutes)	42,083
Video Time (Minutes)	25,318
Screen ShareTime (Minutes)	8,013

Without a doubt, the ability to work remotely is a skill and attribute employers will be looking for in the future and Walton High's students are showing their impressive adaptability in abundance!

## **Digital Divide**

As a result of action taken by the school to address the digital divide, we have now ensured all students have access to a computer and have an internet connection.

To date we have loaned 79 computers to students who either did not have access to a device or who were finding it difficult to do their work because they were having to share a computer with siblings. By Thursday, the number of computers out on loan will have risen to 93 and the school will have fulfilled all the requests we have received.

Many thanks to Mr Laverty, Assistant Principal, for his leadership of this project, MKET's Technical Services Team for their support and the Facilities and Transport Team for delivering the PCs to students' homes. Team work at its best!

At some point in the future, Walton High will receive 33 laptops from the Government for eligible students in Year 10 to borrow. Where space limitations at home make a laptop more convenient, these will be swapped with PCs currently out on loan.

## **When are schools reopening?**

Following the announcement by the Prime Minister on Sunday, should the Government's five tests be met before the 1 June, primary schools may open to some year groups after half term. The Government also indicated that it hopes Year 10 and Year 12 students may also have some face-to-face teaching before the end of the summer term but there was no mention of this being the case for students in Years 7, 8 and 9. We therefore do not expect students in these year groups to return before September. However, we do expect students to continue with their studies at home so they are well placed to hit the ground running in the new academic year.

Should the scientific evidence allow for Year 10 and Year 12 to have some on site teaching before the summer break, parents and students will be advised of the arrangements in good time.

## **Government guidance on protective measures schools should adopt**

The Government has issued advice to schools on what action they should take to open safely either in the near future or later in the year. The guidance is set out here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings>

We would very much welcome parents' thoughts on this guidance and whether, with these protective measures in place, they would be comfortable sending their child to school. If, after having read the Government's guidance, you could complete a short survey, <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/VQJRBXG>, we would be very grateful as the more we are aware of parents' views or concerns, the better placed we are to address these. The survey closes on Monday, 18 May.

## **Update on measures Walton High is taking to keep staff and students safe**

As well as following the advice in the Government's guidance, Walton High intends to do some additional things as set out in Update 12. Progress on some of the things mentioned is outlined below.

## **Use of thermal cameras on entering the building and during the day**

As previously advised, Walton High was investigating the possibility of installing thermal cameras to screen people as they enter the building.

Following consultation with staff, a decision has been made to install these cameras in three locations at both campuses and everyone will have to enter via an entrance covered by a camera. These are due to be installed by the end of May.

### **Use of shared computers**

Rather than clean computers between each lesson, we are investigating the possibility of students being issued with disposable gloves.

### **Wearing face coverings**

Although the Government's guidance does not recommend the wearing of face coverings in schools, students and staff will be allowed to wear face coverings should they choose to do so. Advice will be issued on the safe use of face coverings. The optional use of face coverings has the widespread support of staff.

### **Reusable bottles to replace water fountains**

A team of students led by Theo in Year 10 has been working hard for many months on a project to celebrate Walton High's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary, further reduce single use plastic and to encourage people to drink more water.

After a lot of product development through surveys and trials the team settled on this design.



The bottles are currently being manufactured in the UK and will be issued to students on their return to school.

All water fountains will be removed and replaced by bottle refill stations. These will be the only bottles allowed in classrooms.

### **And finally . . .**

Have you and your family risen to the challenge from Walton High's PE Team yet?

<https://waltonhigh.fireflycloud.net/physical-education/pe-virtual-challenges-1>

Who knows, I might even upload a video of my legendary three minute plank!

Stay in (or alert!), keep your distance, wash your hands, don't touch your face and look after each other!

Thank you for your continued support.

Best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michelle Currie". The signature is written in a cursive style and is contained within a thin black rectangular border.

Michelle Currie  
Executive Principal

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<sup>i</sup> Data covers the period 20 April to 7 May