



from Tom Lawson MA (Oxon), Headmaster

12 May 2020

Dear Parents,

This letter follows Sunday's announcement by the Prime Minister and the government's '[Our Plan to Rebuild](#)' document received yesterday afternoon and the more specific [guidance for schools](#) just released.

It is pleasing that a plan is in place and that the British public can see some light at the end of the tunnel. The Prime Minister described it as a 'shape of a plan...of a sketch of a roadmap', so it is no surprise that it does not provide us with all the answers now. From June 1st the youngest age groups look set to return to St Andrew's Prep; we wish them well. The Charity's superb support team making that possible will develop best practice in safety and hygiene and so will be well prepared when it comes to opening up the College.

The government's direction of travel allows us to project that:

- **we will open fully to all age groups for the start of the Michaelmas term in September 2020;**
- **boarding will recommence then;**
- **where possible, we will be 'business as usual' but we will manage whatever restrictions required in social distancing, hygiene, and restructuring to keep our pupils and staff safe;**
- **we hope that international pupils will be able immediately to take a full part in all activities but, if quarantine arrangements are required, we will ensure they are arranged.**

We cannot be wholly certain that all this will be possible given the conditional nature of the government's strategy but this is our planning assumption and objective.

Our current intention is not to add an exam week or extend beyond the scheduled end of term as may be required in maintained schools, which have lost ground with no live teacher interaction or marked work. With 96 / 98 per cent (Year 10 / Year 12) attendance at the College compared with 34 per cent nationally and an average of 57 per cent for independent schools (Source: *The Times*) we are confident that our exam groups are academically on track. We will consider carefully the progress made by pupils in Year 10 and 12 by scheduling internal assessments next term and if necessary making provision for extra help.

We will follow government guidelines to determine whether any of our pupils can meaningfully return for a portion of the end of this term but without the ability to engage in social, sporting or communal activities it is not clear that a 'mixed economy' (trying to cater for some here and some learning at home) is in the interests of our pupils. I will keep you advised, of course, of all plans and material changes.

Best wishes,

Tom Lawson
Headmaster