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Joseph Clarke School

A member of
Whitefield Academy Trust

Tuesday, 16 June 2020

Dear parents/ carers,

I am pleased to let you know that we are opening more widely for a few more young people.

DfE advice is that special schools do not have to stick to bring back any particular year groups. Instead school leaders are asked to identify as many children as they can safely bring on site. We will be assessing students for returning to school starting from the 23rd June. At this stage, alongside vulnerable children and children of key workers who are already in school, we will start taking back other children in these groups and young people who can socially distance to some extent.

We are only able to welcome back a limited number of young people. This is because we can only have a few young people in each classroom and we need a high staff ratio in the classroom to help with social distancing as much as possible. As you appreciate not all staff can attend work due to shielding, illness and self-isolation. We anticipate that before the end of this term we will have up to 20% of students back for 4 days a week (Monday to Thursday). We are very much looking forward to welcoming a few more young people on to site soon.

To keep everyone as safe as we can, we are organising very small groups into class bubbles with staff who only work with that particular class bubble. We are doing this as a first step so we can assess the systems in place with a view to planning for September. We are awaiting further guidance from the DfE for the September opening.

If we are able to offer your young person a place this term, a member of the Senior Leadership Team or Sarah Bent will contact you to talk about this offer with you.

If you have told us you do not want to send your young person back this term, we understand your concerns and will not ask you to send them to school this term.

Headteacher: Chadia Filali-Moutei
Chair of Governors: Owen O'Regan
Whitefield Academy Trust CEO: Elaine Colquhoun OBE, MEd
Whitefield Academy Trust Chair of Directors: Andrew Howat

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Leading Parent
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I know many of you have expressed your appreciation for all the work the staff are doing to support your young person and I share your appreciation. I fully realise the difficulty of this lockdown situation for parents and carers over the school closure but we are doing everything in our power to make the school site a safe place for students and staff.

I will write to you again the minute we have further information about arrangements for September.

Keep well and stay safe.

Best wishes.

Elaine