

26 May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

RE: Birmingham Ormiston Academy reopening to larger cohorts of students in Years 10 and 12

I plan to write to you all when I officially take up post on 1 June 2020. Given the unprecedented time that we find ourselves in, however, it is important for students and their families to be clear about the academy's arrangements for the forthcoming weeks.

Firstly, I apologise that we have not been able to issue a statement until now. Guidance from the UK Government and the Department for Education has been slow to arrive, particularly for students in Years 10 and 12. Whereas guidance for pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 was released a few weeks ago, guidance for secondary schools has been delayed. On Thursday 21 May, a short statement from the Department for Education advised secondary schools to 'offer some face-to-face support to supplement the remote education of Year 10 students who are due to take GCSEs next year' alongside a message to parents that 'in the meantime, your child should keep studying at home for the exams next year.' The statement also insisted that 'further details [would] follow shortly.' The information can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/help-secondary-school-children-continue-their-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

On Monday 25 May, a more detailed statement was issued by the Department for Education, asking for secondary schools to begin to offer some face-to-face support for students in Years 10 and 12 from 15 June onwards, as well as stating how remote learning 'should remain the predominant mode of education during this term for pupils in these year groups.' Schools and academies have been advised that, in order to reduce the risk of transmission, they should plan to accept 'a quarter of the Year 10 and Year 12 cohort... in school at any one time.' The information can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preparing-for-the-wider-opening-of-schools-from-1-june/planning-guide-for-secondary-schools>

There is much for us to consider ahead of re-opening Birmingham Ormiston Academy (BOA) to larger cohorts of students, especially as the guidance published yesterday asks school leaders to also consider ways of minimising risks outside of school, which includes the safety of students who rely on public transport to travel to and from school. The Senior Leadership Team and members of staff at BOA are currently planning the way forward and I will write to you again at the beginning of next week with details of the face-to-face support we will offer. In the meantime, I advise all students to continue accessing the learning activities that have been published via our remote learning platforms.

For now, I can confirm that we will not re-open BOA to larger cohort of students during the weeks commencing 1 June and 8 June 2020. **Please note:** Arrangements for vulnerable students and children of key workers who have been in contact with the Pastoral Care Team at BOA over the last two months will be upheld during these weeks.



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Ahead of my communication next week, I do hope you are all keeping safe. In addition, please do not hesitate in contacting me if you have any queries.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Alistair Chattaway'.

Alistair Chattaway
Principal from 1 June 2020