



Beaumont School

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Dear Parents/Carers

I hope that you and your families are well and that the Easter period was pleasant and restful, even though it did not provide the usual opportunities for enjoyment and activities. We have been back at school (for a few of us physically and for the rest of us virtually) for a week now, and I thought it would be a good opportunity to send a message about the forthcoming weeks.

You will no doubt be aware that there has been much speculation in the national press about when schools will open more fully, including some suggestions that it could happen very soon. I would like to clarify that we have received no information about this whatsoever, other than the [rebuttal of the rumours](#) issued by the Secretary of State for Education on 19 April, explaining that five tests will need to be met before restrictions can be relaxed. Therefore, I am afraid that I can offer no further information on this point, and our focus is on providing the best education we can for our students under the current circumstances, which could go on for some time. Even when things do start to change, it is very likely that it will be a gradual process with ongoing measures in place, rather than a sudden return to normality. Of course, we will follow all official guidance when the time comes, and will do all we can to strike the right balance between offering as much as we normally do and protecting the health of students, staff and their families.

In the meantime, I would like to remind you of two important decisions which I have made regarding remote learning and the thinking which underpins them.

Firstly, I have not asked my teachers to deliver live lessons either via video or other methods. I can readily appreciate that many of you would like such lessons to take place, and some of the teachers at Beaumont have chosen to provide them, but I do not think it would be right for me to insist on it. This is partly because many of my teachers have children of their own and spend their days caring for them, so it would not be possible for them to teach according to their normal timetables. They are working very hard in the evenings and at weekends to plan work which will enable their students to learn and make progress. Of equal importance is my concern not to disadvantage those students who do not have access to devices which would enable them to participate in such lessons, or who have to share equipment with other family members. If this is the case in your household, please rest assured that we have your children's interests at heart and want to avoid setting work which will cause your children to fall behind because of the difficulties of participating.

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The second decision is to ask my staff to prioritise setting and monitoring assignments over marking them. I believe that they can best meet students' needs by planning work carefully, assessing whether it has been completed to a satisfactory standard, checking whether students understand it and adapting future work accordingly, rather than by providing individual feedback. Where possible, teachers will set online quizzes which mark themselves, provide answers so students can assess their own work, or review students' answers and give feedback to the whole class. On an individual level, the main method of feedback will be through My Child At School, where teachers can issue positives to praise effort and negatives to raise concerns about work not being completed.

In order to avoid teachers issuing negatives when students are poorly, please can I remind you to inform the school if your child is unwell and consequently unable to complete work. You should do so by completing this form <https://forms.gle/trwfeVuBeVj3CU4GA>. I cannot promise that it will be a foolproof mechanism to avoid teachers making mistakes, but we will do our best.

Thank you so much for your ongoing patience and support for your children's education at such a difficult time. We will make mistakes, but we are learning so much every day and hopefully this will enable us to do a better job as time passes. I look forward to the day when things are safe enough for us to welcome all our students back to school.

Yours sincerely



Mr Martin Atkinson
Headteacher

