

June 2020

Dear Parents,

I thought I should write to you with a brief update to reassure you that the governance of the school continues through this difficult time.

All of the usual work of the governing body has continued through the pandemic. The curriculum, finance and community committees have continued their regular programme of meetings, albeit remotely. There have been regular meetings between the head, senior staff, myself and the chairs of the committees to keep us up to date with how the school is operating during this difficult time.

Yesterday I chaired a meeting of this group to oversee plans to re-open the school next week for some face to face contact for students in Year 10 and Year 12. The plan that the school has put in place adheres strictly to the guidance published by the Department for Education and we are confident that everything is in place to ensure the safety of both staff and pupils.

The plan is necessarily complicated because the DfE are adamant that only  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the pupils should be in the school on any given day.

I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the staff of the school for all of their hard work during this crisis. It has been a very difficult task to try to oversee the learning of pupils without access to the school and the normal method of face to face contact.

Of course a small minority of staff have still been coming in everyday including through holidays and bank holidays to look after the children of keyworkers and I would like to thank them especially.

I wanted also to mention that from a governance perspective we are satisfied that the school has put everything in place to appropriately accredit students in Years 11, 12 and 13. Balcarras has a long track record of success so there is no reason to believe that this cohort of young people won't go on to be just as successful as previous year groups.

Finally I wanted to thank all of our parents for your continued support for the school. We've always recognised that the school's success relied on a close partnership between staff and parents but in a pandemic that matters even more.

I know that the head, his senior team and the whole staff are eager to return to normal as soon as we can. We look forward to that day.

Yours sincerely,



Rosi Shepherd  
Chair of Trustees