



SIR TOM FINNEY COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL

Ribbleton Hall Drive, Preston, PR2 6EE

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June 9th 2020

Dear Parents/Carers and families

You will have continued to hear much in the news, press and social media about the re-opening of schools to specific year groups including those in primary schools and contact with year 10 and year 12. **Please Note: This is for mainstream schools only and not special schools.**

Special schools like Sir Tom Finney Community High are being asked to carry on as they have been doing. Which is to remain open for a relatively small number of individual young people based upon a risk assessment of need and vulnerability.

However, it is well publicised that the 'R' rate (rate of infection) in the North West region is slightly above 1, higher than anywhere else in the country. This is a critical factor in decision making and risk assessment and until this rate is sustained below 1, we will not be able to take any further admissions into school for any reason other than very clear and agreed 'critical' cases or situations as this would increase the risk to the currently admitted students and staff working with them.

As a reminder, the priority individuals using a risk assessment approach are:

1. Those children who have at least one of their parents in the household listed as an essential key worker (*according to the government definition of essential key workers*).
2. Those children who have a safeguarding concern or social care input and it is agreed with social worker and family or residential settings that it would be safer and in the best interests of the child to be attending school.
3. Those children where it is deemed, via a risk assessment agreed between school and family, that they are vulnerable and it is safer and in the child's best interests to be attending school. This includes those where **both** parents are returning to work.

Therefore the principle of **'Stay at home to be safe'** still applies to those on our school roll. This is particularly the case for those who have been recognised as being:

1. Classed as clinically extremely vulnerable eg. with a pre-existing serious medical condition.
2. Classed as clinically vulnerable as it is clear that within a special school context a two metre social distance cannot be maintained at all times.



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3. Those showing significant extremes of fear and anxiety; our experience tells us this is prevalent within those young people presenting with ASD.
4. Those whose families still have concerns and feel it is simply safer for their child to remain at home for the foreseeable future. (*Currently there are no penalties in place for any family who want their child to remain at home, because they feel it is the safest place to be*).
5. Those where needs can be safely accommodated and home working or activities can be offered.

In order for school to remain 'open' we have undertaken Premises, Organisational and Operational risk assessments and have been reliant on staff numbers being available to meet the needs, demands and challenges of those attending. This approach will continue to be the methodology which determines how many young people can attend in order to maintain as risk-safe an environment as possible.

It is important to stress that given the current guidance on how schools must work with limiting numbers in class groups and avoiding mixing and maintaining distancing within a timetabled structure. The school will not be able to accommodate the full number of students that are on roll for the foreseeable future.

The school has made a risk assessment that indicates how many students can be safely accommodated given the restrictions and guidance and the individual needs and the numbers of staff that would be required.

Once that figure is reached the school will not allow any further returning students over and above that number on any particular day on the grounds of Health and Safety.

This is to ensure the safety of all as we continue to move forward under the current restrictions, leading to other alternative arrangements such as part time attendance, staggered starts and ends to the day and additional home working.

Thank you for your continued patience and understanding.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Shaun Jukes'.

**Shaun Jukes
Headteacher**