

PRINCIPAL: S.W. BLACK, M.Sc.



**BALLYMENA ACADEMY,
GALGORM ROAD,
BALLYMENA,
CO. ANTRIM.
BT42 1AJ**

**TELEPHONE: 028 2565 2782/3
FAX: 028 2563 0855**

19th June, 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian,

I trust that this letter finds you and your family safe and well.

Following yesterday's statement by the Minister for Education, Peter Weir MLA, in relation to the re-opening of schools, it was announced that schools would receive detailed guidance today on the implementation of his proposals. The guidance was subsequently published late this afternoon and thus it has been impossible to give it proper consideration.

However, it has been pleasing to receive confirmation that schools can re-open on 24th August for pupils (in the current Years 11 and 13) and a reduction in social distancing requirements between young people in a school setting, making re-opening of schools a much more viable proposition.

We share the Minister's ambition to open school to as many pupils as possible but it is optimistic to believe that any social distancing requirement would enable all pupils to be in school on the same day. Significant planning for re-opening has been undertaken and details of our plans for re-opening will be forwarded to you once we have had the opportunity to study the detailed guidance from the Department of Education.

I apologise that I am unable to provide greater detail to you this afternoon but trust that you will appreciate the reasoning behind this.

Further information, which should assist you in your planning for the Autumn Term, will be issued next week. We trust that the measures which we put in place will ensure that pupils, parents and staff will all have confidence that it is safe to return and will strike the right balance between maximising the number of pupils back in the classroom and doing this in a way that is as safe as possible.

If anyone has any queries in the interim, please speak to me or to any member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Take care,

Yours faithfully,

S.W. Black (Principal)

