

## Back to school service update



### Update

We communicated last week with an update on our operational plan and current service levels for 2020 back to school.

We know that schoolwear has a significant sales peak at the end of August and we implemented a number of changes to the way that we operate to help us cope with this peak, whilst at the same time keeping customers and colleagues safe.

We invested in an on-line appointment system that went live in June, enabling customers to book personalised appointments in store.

Although large numbers of parents have followed our Covid-19 communication plan of; **1) Shop Early 2) New starters book an appointment for a personalised store visit 3) Existing students to order online**, we have received a huge number of late orders, specifically via the web.

The volume of late web orders is a challenge for our operational and customer service teams who are unable to increase the workforce to normal levels due to maintaining a COVID secure workplace. Throughout the summer we have been working extended hours with two shifts, 7 days a week to deliver as many orders as possible. This will continue for the next few weeks to ensure we deliver all orders as soon as possible.



### Stores Update

We have completed over 25,000 appointments delivering a personalised 1:1 shopping experience for customers. This has worked extremely well and we have achieved an average 93% customer satisfaction score.

The new appointment system has also helped us serve thousands of customers who would ordinarily be served in August, alleviating some of the pressure of the height of peak trading.

Our stores are now operating at maximum capacity in accordance with social distancing rules.

We have extended our opening days and hours at all our stores and have additional staff operating in a safe and secure manner, including extra times for parents to visit the store without an appointment.

We have extended our click and collect operation with parents now being able to collect during our extended opening hours.

We have over 5,000 orders waiting to be collected from our stores with all parents receiving communication requesting collection to free up space in store.



### Website Update

We continue to see unprecedented numbers of orders through the website (now over 500% increase) with a surge in the last week.

All customers with an open order have been communicated to by email and we will send regular updates and email when their order has been dispatched.

A small minority of orders placed after the 3rd August recommended cutoff date may not be delivered before the start of term – however we are working hard to deliver as many as possible before back to school and the remainder as soon as possible in September.

Parents have been advised that any new in-stock orders placed are currently up to a 14 working day delivery schedule although many of these orders are being delivered sooner than this.



### Thank you

Lastly, we would like to take this opportunity to thank you once again for all your support during these unprecedented times.

Covid-19 has provided a one off challenge for back to school, with stores closed for months, stock delays and all our staff working in new ways.

Despite all our investments and planning, we have been unable to keep up with the volume of web orders in some locations and this means that we are letting a minority of parents and their children down. We are very sorry and want to assure all our customers that we will continue to work tirelessly to deliver their orders as soon as we can, whilst keeping our colleagues safe and adhering to our COVID secure working practices. We are very grateful for your patience and understanding.

Lastly, we totally understand the importance of school uniform and the extra challenges you face on opening next week so would like to wish you the best of luck when you welcome your students back to school.