



28th August 2020

Dear Parents / Carers

Arrangements for September 2020

I am pleased to provide you with vital information regarding the start of the new academic year. I apologise in advance for the length of this letter, but I felt that it was important to provide comprehensive details regarding our plans and to outline the steps that have already been taken to keep our school community safe.

Returning to school in September is mandatory for all students and is very important from both an academic and social point of view. The priority is the health, safety and wellbeing of the entire school community, and although we cannot guarantee that we can keep everyone completely safe from catching Covid-19, we can and will take a wide range of steps to minimise risks. A full risk assessment to support this has already been undertaken.

With the significant amount of time spent on home learning, there will be a degree of anxiety about returning to school, particularly for our new cohort of students, and we have mechanisms in place to support all students throughout this period of reintegration.

Outlined below are the key pieces of information we feel are important and, should the situation remain as it is, the steps we will take. We very much hope it helps in making you feel secure in the knowledge that we are taking all necessary actions to support a safe return to school.

September Start Dates

The days for return to school are:

- **Thursday 3rd & Friday 4th September 2020 - New Year 7 students only**
- **Monday 7th September 2020 - All students to return to school**

This staggered approach will allow our new Year 7 cohort to receive a proper transition to support the virtual induction already provided, and will enable us to go through the new procedures we have in place with all students, in a safe manner.

Students should arrive promptly by 8.30am and will be dismissed at the end of the day at the usual time of 3pm.

Bubbles and Zones

Each year group will be a 'bubble' and each bubble will be based in a zone of classrooms in which lessons will take place. As we only have two year groups there is no need for a staggered start and end to the day. Specific entrances have been identified for each year group, as well as specific outside and dining areas.

Year 7 students should enter the school via the main community entrance on Paxman Avenue, whereas Year 8 students should enter via the side entrance leading from Walnut Tree Way. Staff will be on duty to direct students.

Gates will open at 8.15am and students will enter gradually, allowing time for handwashing and entry to assigned rooms. Staff will supervise this process.

Each year group will have a designated set of rooms in close proximity to each other. These rooms will be the base for Tutor Group time and for the majority of lessons. On the first day of the new academic year, students will start the day with a tutor session outlining the general issues of returning to school, as well as an opportunity for more specific details surrounding safety, and the monitoring and wellbeing of students.

Students will be taught in full classes to enable the curriculum to be delivered more effectively. All teaching rooms will be set up with students sitting next to each other with tables facing forward and teachers maintaining a 2-metre distance, as per DfE guidance. For the significant majority of each day, students will remain in their class; it will be the teachers who will move from class to class. All students will have access to the full curriculum including practical subjects such as Art, Music, Drama Technology and PE, however, the practical element in each subject will be more limited in order to meet guidelines.

Academic and Social Recovery

We have mechanisms in place to ensure we are able to identify any possible gaps in the learning that should have been undertaken throughout lockdown, and have strategies to make sure these areas are caught up by students where necessary.

In terms of the social recovery and wellbeing, we also have a programme that we have developed to support students through the reintegration to school life and of course, what it currently looks like. This will take place predominantly through the tutor programme and we will need your support in identifying any concerns you may have on an ongoing basis.

Medical Updates

Should your child's medical condition have changed recently, please ensure that you provide the school with details ahead of their September return to school.

Uniform

Full school uniform is expected from all students on return to school, and full details can be found on the school website.

PE Lessons

On the days that students have PE, they will be requested to come to school wearing their full PE kit. Given that hygiene is a major consideration, students will be expected to wear navy blue jogging bottoms, as per school policy. School blazers must be worn over the PE kit. Students will not have access to changing rooms.

Students will not have a PE lesson on their first day of term and should therefore wear normal school uniform.

Lockers

Students will not be permitted to store items in lockers during the Autumn Term, and will therefore be expected to keep bags, coats and other personal items with them at all times. We will inform you when the use of lockers can be safely resumed.

Phone Zone

Any students needing to make an essential / urgent phone call home during either break or lunchtime will be permitted to go to their year group Pastoral Office for support. In order to avoid congestion and infection, the Phone Zone will not operate for the foreseeable future.

Behaviour

Whilst we know that our students are looking forward to returning to school, and we are delighted they will be here, our expectations of behaviour will be exceptionally high and even more important than ever to keep our entire community safe and able to fully focus on their learning.

We have an addendum to our Behaviour for Learning Policy which can be found on the policies section of our website. These expectations are not negotiable and students failing to meet the requirements will receive sanctions with immediate effect. Please read this addendum so that you are aware of, and can fully support, the expectations we have put in place to ensure all students feel they can learn safely and free from disruption. We will not hesitate to take tough action should any student whose actions seek to create fear amongst others or put others at risk by deliberately not following guidelines and expectations (for example coughing near people, obstructing corridors etc.).

Catering

The Food Plant will be open but there will be a reduced provision and this will be available during morning break and lunch time. Each year group will have a dedicated serving time during their lunch break.

Students will need to bring full water bottles with them, as they will not be able to fill bottles at school.

Social Distancing and Hygiene

Maintaining hygiene is of the utmost importance. The rules for schools around social distancing for students have changed significantly, provided we maintain bubbles and minimise any mixing of these bubbles. However, it is very important that students follow the procedures we have in place. Our procedures will include regular sanitising and washing of hands, no sharing of equipment with other students, not touching other students or their belongings, following 'Catch it, Bin it, Kill it' rules at all times, as well as maintaining these routines on the way to and from school.

It has been identified that students are not required to socially distance as a result of observing the return of primary schools on 1st June, however, the procedures are still identified in guidance as appropriate. Social distancing for adults remains and measures will be in place to enable that to happen; staff and students will be expected to be respectful of this.

Face masks/coverings

All students should ensure that they have a face covering and also a plastic bag in which to place the covering when not in use. Students will be able to wear their own PPE if they wish to do so and will be encouraged to wear them particularly when they are not in the classroom or where social distancing cannot be maintained.

All staff will be encouraged to wear a face covering when they are not in the classroom or where social distancing cannot be maintained. All staff will be provided with a face visor, which they will wear at their discretion.

We will spend time educating staff and students on how to wear face coverings, as well as safe removal and storage.

Any visitors to the school site will be required to wear a face covering.

Cleaning

Our cleaning protocols and regularity of cleaning have increased significantly and will continue to do so in all areas of the school e.g. toilet facilities, kitchen, auditorium, door

handles, classrooms etc. Cleaning materials will be available in each room, with tissues and safe bins for disposal. There may be occasions when we need students to wipe a table and chair that they have sat in or equipment that they have used. This would be to ensure the lessons can be commenced swiftly and will be kept to a minimum, if at all.

Transport

Where possible students should walk or cycle to school, but where this is not possible, to be brought by car would be the next preferred option. Dropping students off to walk the final stages would greatly assist, minimising congestion and therefore contact. There will be no parental access to the car park at the start or end of the day, unless prior arrangement has been made. We ask that parents/carers do not congregate at the school gates.

Public Transport

Any students travelling by public transport must follow the guidance the transport company has in place. This currently includes the wearing of face masks.

School Trips and Clubs

At this time, we are not planning any trips.

Extra-curricular activities, including breakfast club, will not start immediately and there will almost certainly be a change to what we can offer when clubs do commence.

Once again, my apologies for the length of this letter, but I felt you would want to be aware of what will happen upon opening. Many parents/carers and indeed staff will be anxious about the full return to school. The measures we have in place are to support everyone feeling positive and secure. Most importantly, our students will return to school and start re-engaging safely in their learning journey and commence the interaction with their teachers and peers that they have so missed.

I am certain you will support the measures outlined and we will continue to work with you throughout this difficult period and beyond.

Yours sincerely



Mrs CA Moffat
Headteacher