

Dear parent/carer

17 July 2020

Following the government guidance published earlier this month, we have been making arrangements to fully re-open the school in September and welcome back all of our pupils. We are working hard to make the school a safe environment for all and wanted to get in touch before the end of term to explain some of the detail.

This letter will contain information about:

- safety measures
- attendance
- curriculum
- SEND provision
- pastoral support
- parental support, including equipment required
- arrangements for the start of term

We would really appreciate it if you would take the time to read this letter so that you have a full understanding of the changes that will be in place when we open our doors for all in September.

Safety Measures

The government guidance is extensive and has allowed us to put numerous safety measures in place, which are outlined here:

Government guidance	TOA planning
Clean hands more regularly than usual	Pupils will be asked to clean their hands regularly, including when they arrive at school, when they return from breaks and before and after eating.
Minimise contact between individuals and maintain social distancing wherever possible	Each year group will be based in a different area of the school and will have most of their lessons in this area. Year groups will also have separate arrival and departure points, as well as separate break and lunch areas. We will refer to these groups as year group bubbles. The school canteen will not be open at break or lunch. We will still offer packed lunches but these will be eaten in the year group areas.
Reduce the amount of equipment that is shared	We will expect pupils to attend school with a set of basic equipment (outlined later on in this letter) so that there is limited sharing. This equipment will not be provided for pupils, even when they arrive to school without it. Some subject-specific equipment might be shared within a year group bubble but this will be kept to a minimum and a cleaning routine will be in place.

<p>Minimise contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have coronavirus (COVID19) symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does, do not attend school</p>	<p>Pupils, staff and other adults will not be able to come into the school if they have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms. In the event of a pupil displaying symptoms, PPE will be worn by staff caring for that pupil while they await collection if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained. Everyone must wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with soap and running water or use hand sanitiser after any contact with someone who is unwell.</p>
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The link to the government guidance is here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

Attendance

Attendance to school will be compulsory in September, as the government are expecting all pupils to attend. We will be recording attendance as usual and following up on any absences. If your child is unable to attend because of coronavirus or if they are unwell (for any other reason other than potential coronavirus) please telephone the school on the morning of the absence. This is the same system that we had in place before the school closed on March 20th.

If your child is currently staying at home due to the current shielding guidance, the government is due to pause this guidance on August 1st so we will expect pupils in this position to return to school in September. However, if you have received clinical or public health advice that your child should still remain at home, please let us know.

Curriculum

Although our school will be different in many ways in September, we will still be providing our pupils with a broad curriculum that helps build knowledge and skills over time. Where possible, and in line with government guidance, we are able to provide some lessons taught in specialist classrooms to ensure that pupils can continue to take part in more practical lessons as much as possible.

An important part of our curriculum delivery in September will be reminding pupils about the enjoyment of learning, alongside promoting the importance of routine and structure. We know that many pupils have engaged with the home learning that we have been providing but nothing can replace the classroom environment. Our subject leaders have been working hard, along with their teams, to prepare for the return to the classroom. Whilst there will be gaps in knowledge that we will need to identify and rectify, we will be also be ambitious about delivering our curriculum at pace so that no pupil is disadvantaged.

We will be providing parents with more regular information about how pupils are getting on in the classroom and we will provide you with more details about this in September.

We are particularly aware of the potential difficulties that our Y11 and Y13 pupils could face. We welcome the fact that the government have identified these and that there is currently a consultation on how the exams might be modified to address the period of school closure, and whether the timings of the exams might be later on in the year. We will continue to act on the guidance as it is published and will keep parents of Y11 and Y13 pupils updated as and when we can.

We will also be developing our remote learning provision, in case of the need for a local lockdown or for individual pupils. As far as possible, this will be aligned to our normal school curriculum.

SEN provision

Our pupils with SEND will continue to be well supported by our inclusion team. We will still be offering interventions and targeted support for relevant pupils. Teaching Assistants will still be able to support our pupils but this will be a different way as they will not be able to be in the classroom. In each year group area, there will be an inclusion space. Pupils can seek support there at lunchtimes, if needed. Please be assured that the arrangements for September will not disadvantage those pupils with SEND as we have been mindful of the support they will require during our planning.

Pastoral Support

We are aware the period of lockdown has been a difficult time for many of us and it is vital that we provide the appropriate pastoral support for our pupils. Our support is designed to help pupils:

- rebuild their friendships and social engagement with others
- address and respond to issues linked with coronavirus
- improve their physical and mental wellbeing

Heads of Year and Learning Mentors will, where possible, be based within each year group bubble and will be able to offer additional pastoral support as needed. We will also use external support and our own mental health team to support wellbeing, where needed.

Your child's Head of Year will be writing to the pupils next week to give them some more detailed information.

Parental Support

We really do value your support and have also appreciated your contact and feedback during the period of school closure. There are a number of areas where we hope you can continue to support us, in order for us to support your children. They are:

- Engage with the information that we are providing you with and discuss with your child before the start of next term
- Let us know if you have any particular concerns or are worried about your child being particularly anxious about returning
- Provide your child with the following equipment so that they are prepared for learning

Pupils should bring a pencil case to school containing the following:

- pencil case
- two black or blue pens
- pencil
- rubber
- ruler
- a second coloured pen (any colour but green or red suggested)
- scientific calculator

It would also be useful for pupils to have the following:

- glue stick
- pencil sharpener
- highlighters (two or more colours)

Arrangements for the start of term

The first two days of term (Tuesday 1st and Wednesday 2nd September) are for our staff only. We will be preparing for the return of the pupils, ensuring that all staff are ready to welcome them back safely.

We will then be opening our doors for the pupils on Thursday 3rd and Friday 4th September. For most of our pupils, this will be the first time that they will have stepped onto the school site since the middle of March. We are very mindful of this and have thought carefully about how we make sure that the return to school is a positive and supportive experience. We want to be able to give the time to each year group that they deserve so that we explain what school is going to be like and offer reassurance. To this end, we are going to have a staggered start for each year as outlined below. With the exception of Y11, all year groups will finish the day at 3.05pm. From Monday 8th September, all pupils will be expected to arrive at the usual start time.

Thursday 3rd September:

Y7 – pupils can arrive any time between 8.10am and 8.40am – finish 3.05pm

Y12 – 11am - finish 3.05pm

Y11 – 11.30am (pupils will leave at 1pm)



Friday 4th September:

Y7, Y11 and Y12 – normal arrival time with tutor time starting at 8.45am

Y13 – pupils can arrive any time between 8.10am and 8.40am

Y8 – 9am

Y9 – 9.15am

Y10 – 9.30am

Thank you for taking the time to read this information and for supporting us in our preparations for September. We will be in touch again at the start of next term with some more detailed information so that you can fully understand how the school will work in September, both in terms of safety and also practicalities.

We wish you and your families well for the summer period and look forward to working with you again next year.

Yours faithfully,

Abi Banks

Abi Banks
Senior Deputy Headteacher