

13th July 2020

Dear Parents

As we approach the end of a challenging summer term under lockdown, I am aware you will be eager to know what our safety first plans for September are looking like.

Circumstances have changed since schools began welcoming back limited numbers of students in June. The prevalence of coronavirus has decreased, track and trace systems are in operation and we are clear about the measures that need to be in place to create safer environments within schools.

Returning to school is vital for students' education and wellbeing and we are looking forward to welcoming everyone back full time in September. We are therefore making judgements at school about how to balance and minimise any risks from Covid 19 with providing a full educational experience for our students. We are currently putting in place proportionate protective measures for students and staff, following guidelines from the DfE and Public Health England, and we are confident we can manage risk effectively and provide high quality education. Here is a link to the guidance for schools if you would like to read it:

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

There's also an updated version of the guidance for parents and carers and you can access that by following this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-in-the-autumn-term>

Our risk assessments follow the PHE endorsed system of controls appropriate to our own contexts, which are adapted from the measures we have taken over the summer term. Essential measures include:

- A requirement that people who are ill stay at home
- Robust hand and respiratory hygiene
- Enhanced cleaning arrangements
- Active engagement with NHS Test and Trace
- Minimising contacts and maximising distance between everyone in school wherever possible

Plans have been shared with staff and governors, and we are consulting as widely as we can to make sure they are right. Risk assessments will be published on our website as soon as they have been approved by the Local Authority.

Although plans are yet to be finalised, there are some things we will be putting in place that we can tell you about now, and others that we may put in place and will confirm in August when we are nearer term starting and will know what conditions we are operating under. Some things about school will be different, but in many ways, the new term

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will be very similar to where we were – uniform rules remain the same, for example, as will our expectations around attendance and punctuality. Indeed, practicalities like these will be even more important as we support students to get back into good habits and work with the structure and support school offers.

We will:

- work on the basis that we, like the government, expect all students to attend school
- plan our curriculum to make sure it is going to help students back into learning quickly; we've also made additional plans in case there's a local lockdown and made sure we can go to high quality remote learning immediately.
- operate schools in key stage 'bubbles'; Years 7 and 8 in one, and Years 9, 10 and 11 in another. Students in bubbles will not mix with each other at all to reduce the risk of infection with separate entrances and exits
- work with school transport to ensure students stick to the expectations of our providers including wearing face masks – we will be in touch about this again in due course
- have hand sanitisers in every classroom and strict protocols for hand washing
- rearrange classes so that all desks are forward facing
- Students will remain in one classroom and teachers will move to them (except for specialist facilities such as science labs and technology rooms)
- offer hot school meals at break and lunchtime, albeit in a different way
- have clear and high expectations of behaviour and amend our policy to reflect new conditions under Covid 19
- support your child with their well-being as they return to school

We are aware that you or your child may be anxious about returning to school and I hope that the measures I have outlined in this letter will reassure you. The benefits of students returning to school outweigh the risks, and the government have said that attendance is mandatory for all in September. If you have any concerns, please do contact school and we will be happy to talk these through with you.

We will be starting the term with two days Inset for staff on September 1st and 2nd, and your child's first day back will be Thursday September 3rd. We will be in touch with you nearer the time with the details of what those first days will look like, and what your child should expect when they return to school. Please look out for our letter and email towards the end of August.

We hope you all enjoy a restful summer and stay safe and well.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely



Judith Schafer
Executive Headteacher