

10th July 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

I hope this letter finds you and your family safe and well.

On Friday 3rd July, I wrote to confirm that all students would be returning to school at the start of the new academic year in September. This followed the release of the Department for Education's guidance on how schools should plan to make this happen in a way that will be as safe as possible, for all students and staff. The overall objective in the guidance is to find ways to keep year groups apart from one another, in what have been called 'bubbles'.

You can read the full guidance from the Department for Education by using the following link.

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

I am only writing at this stage to confirm that we will be able to make this happen for all students. We have been making detailed plans that include rewriting many aspects of the planned timetable and a rearrangement of some areas of our site. On **Monday 13th July**, I will share our plans with fellow Trust schools and members of the Board. We did this before the return of Years 10 and 12 and it was a helpful process in scrutinising each other's plans and sharing best practice. Assuming there are no significant changes to our plan, I intend to write to all parents on **Tuesday 14th July** to share the details of how we will return.

We have been fortunate as the size of our site has made some aspects of the guidance more manageable to arrange than might have been the case. The following are key aims that we are hoping to achieve:

- All students will have access to the full curriculum with no need to 'drop' subjects.
- There will be no reduction to the number of total learning hours for students.
- We will be able to arrange year groups in 'zones' for a large part of each school day to ensure the kind of indoor separation that is required and restrict mass movements.
- We will be able to use different areas of the school for serving and eating food at lunch that also helps keep year group 'bubbles' intact.
- Key Stage 4 and 5 classes will be able to follow exactly the same sequence of lessons to start and finish their exam courses properly, with their normal allocation of single and double lessons.
- We will be limiting the need for staggering starts as much as is possible and there will be no more than 30 minutes between the first morning lesson starting at 8.30am and the last morning lesson starting at 9am.
- The end of the day for teaching lessons will not be later than 3pm (individual year groups will be confirmed next week) and once we have settled back in, we will be able to use after school time for year group specific extracurricular activities, or year group specific revision and intervention.

I wanted to share this with you before the weekend as I hope you will find it reassuring that although things will be a little different, it will not need to be too radical. We will, of course, be making sure that recommended practice with regards to hygiene and sanitisation is followed. Those students who have been attending school are already well used to sanitising before entering the building and when moving between rooms and leaving the site. Every room has been equipped for that to continue next term.

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As we have been making these plans, it became clear that we needed to make one small change to the start of next term. I wanted to give you maximum notice of this.

Monday 7th September will remain the first day of term for all year groups **except Year 7 who will not be attending on this day**. However, rather than being a normal first day, each year group will instead attend a 2 hour session with their Tutor. There will be a lot to explain in relation to how we will operate and we are mindful that some students will not have been in school since 19th March and may find this very strange. We want to support everyone. The sessions will welcome the students back, enable them to see their classmates, help reassure them about the new systems and give them a chance to understand their new timetable and ask questions. The timetable for these sessions will be shared in my letter next week, but we think they will help us have a calmer day when **all lessons resume on Tuesday 8th September**.

As there have been a number of dates shared in this and recent letters, I thought the following summary might be helpful:

- **Friday 17th July:** Last day of term for students currently attending.
- **Thursday 13th August:** 6th Form Results Day.
- **Thursday 20th August:** GCSE Results Day.
- **Thursday 3rd September:** Staff Training Day.
- **Friday 4th September:** Year 7 Induction Day and Year 12 Registration Day.
- **Monday 7th September:** Tutorial sessions for all year groups, **except Year 7 who will have had their tutorial sessions on the Year 7 Induction Day**.
- **Tuesday 8th September:** Full timetable begins for all students.

Thank you very much for your continued support and I look forward to sharing further details with you next week.

Yours sincerely



David Herbert