

2nd September 2020

Dear Parents/ Carers,

I wanted to write to update you further regarding school and COVID-19, and the changes that will be in place from next week (September 2020).

Over the summer we have been making alternative plans, timetables, and adjustments to the environment to support a successful return to learning. I hope that by the reading this letter you feel reassured that we are ready for your child to return to onsite full-time learning.

As explained in the letter in July, we have been unable to conduct our usual transition process for new students, and consequently the first two days of the Autumn Term will be for Year 7 students only. Key Stage 3 and 4 will return fully from the Wednesday and all students should be in school on Thursday 10th September.

Return to school:

Year 7	Monday 7th September
Year 8 to 11	Wednesday 9th September
Year 12 to 14	Thursday 10th September

We appreciate that school will seem different to students, and some activities will be different or not able to take place at all, but we will continue to review the situation regularly in line with government guidance. The school has created a new risk assessment for the autumn term which includes many of the measures below; this risk assessment is available to you on the school website.

There are a number of operational factors that we have considered when welcoming all our students back on site:

- **On-site Hygiene**

- All students and staff will have a frequent handwashing routine within school
- Students should minimise the equipment they bring to school, but they should have an individual, named water bottle (not metal) which can be refilled
- Hand sanitiser and tissues are available in all classrooms, and each student will have their own pack of classroom resources so these do not need to be brought in from home
- On days when sunscreen is required, students should arrive with all day sunscreen already applied



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- **Uniform**

- Students should return to school in full school uniform
- Students should wear fresh, clean uniform each day
- Sensible footwear should be worn, as there may be more outdoor learning taking place
- Students should wear PE kit on the days they have PE to avoid the need to change on site (black shorts or jogging bottoms, trainers). Timetables will be communicated to students after the second week

- **Teaching and Learning**

- As the school has small classrooms in comparison to mainstream schools, and social distancing will continue to be important, we will be creating two bubbles –
 - Bubble 1 Key Stage 3
 - Bubble 2 Key Stage 4 and 5 with specific pod for Functional/Liveability students
- The majority of Functional/Liveability will be in their existing teaching spaces
- As much as possible, students will be kept within an area of the school to ensure that there is no cross contamination between bubbles
- As much as possible, students will remain in the same classroom with the same support staff from their bubble
- Teaching staff will need to move between bubbles to provide the breadth of the curriculum but they will limit their physical interaction. Allocated bubble support staff will ensure students have the support they require to be successful in the classroom
- As much as possible, resources will be kept within a bubble, for example there will be specialist Art equipment in each bubble
- Students will have the opportunity to use specialist teaching facilities, this will be done on a bubble rotation timetable in order to avoid cross contamination
- Classroom and other spaces will be rearranged to minimise direct face-on contact between students and staff
- A rigorous cleaning routine will be put in place for practical equipment such as science and PE resources and a two-week rotation will enable all groups to have access to practical sessions with thorough cleaning in between
- Toilet facilities will be allocated per bubble to ensure each bubble does not need to share

- **Lunch and Break**

- Outside space will be rotated to ensure each group has access to facilities and will be cleaned in line with the government recommendations
- Horsforth School, who provide our schools meals have confirmed that meals for the first half term will be grab-bags of cold and hot sandwiches. You are welcome to send a packed lunch into school for your child instead. Menu information will be sent out later this week.
- Students will eat lunch in their classrooms to ensure that there is less movement around the school
- Students who bring packed lunch can continue to do so in named container



- **Student to Staff Ratio**

- School predominately functions on 3 students to 1 staff member ratio. We will continue to ensure that this is in place for September
- Students will continue to access specialist support in line with their Educational Health Care Plan
- Staff support will be provided to students side to side or from behind following government guidance

- **Arrival and Pick up**

- Parents/carers should ensure that they have contacted Local Authority (LA) transport and confirmed their child's place if they are intending to use this in September
- Student should not access LA transport if they or any of their household are experiencing COVID 19 symptoms or they have been informed to isolate
- Students using transport are required to wear a mask unless there is a legitimate reason not to, this includes:
 - if you have a physical or mental illness or impairment, or a disability that means you cannot put on, wear or remove a face covering
 - if putting on, wearing or removing a face covering would cause you severe distress
 - if you are travelling with, or providing help to, someone who relies on lip reading to communicate
- If you are intending to bring your child to school, please be aware that social distancing measures will still be in place:
 - Parents/carers will not be allowed to escort their child onto site (without prior arrangement with the school)
 - Parents/carers should ensure they are waiting 2m away from other parents/carers whilst waiting to drop off/collect their child
 - Parents/carers arriving in a car should wait at the top for the car in front to return from dropping off their child before driving to the roundabout
 - Staff welcoming students to school in the morning from transport will be required to wear face masks due to the necessary interaction with escorts and families.

- **Clubs and Trips**

- Unfortunately, we will be unable to run lunch time clubs initially, but will be reviewing this at the end of the first half term in October
- Shine events and community visits will be under review and we will communicate with parents on how this will look as soon as possible

- **Absence from School**



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- Parents/carers should inform the school if their child is ill on the first day of illness as per the usual procedure, please refer to the attendance policy on the school website for information
- During the pandemic each child's illness will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and a discussion will need to take place with school before returning
- If a student is showing any symptoms of Covid-19 they should not attend school – these are a high temperature, a dry cough or a loss or change to their sense of smell or taste
- If a student develops these symptoms whilst in school they will be sent home and parents/carers should request a test and follow '[Stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#)'
- **Government guidance is that all students will return to school as normal in September**

- **Masks**

- At present we believe that the systems and precautions we have implemented mean that masks should not need to be worn, however masks will be available for communal areas for staff and students but are not mandatory. The adjustments we have made to the school day should limit the amount of movement in communal areas to a minimum
- If Leeds has a local lockdown, then the school will follow the government tier 1-4 guidance including the use of masks
- Any prior agreed visitor, parent or student will need to remove their mask on arrival at school, without touching the front of the mask. Visitors or Parents may be requested to wear an additional masks dependant on the activity.
- Some students and staff members with individual risk assessment due to health conditions or behavioural needs may be requested to wear a mask
- Staff will be required to wear masks for certain specified activities e.g. personal care
- Disposable masks should be placed into the bin and non-disposable masks put into a container to be taken home
- The school hygiene routine should then be followed

- **Visitors including Parents**

- We are limiting the number of visitors on site in order to minimise contact transmission
- Any visitor will need to agree to the school's risk assessment and health and safety protocols and follow the school hygiene routines
- All parents/carers will need to make an appointment if they wish to come on site. We are sorry that we are unable to see anyone unannounced



- **Out of School Activities**

- Whilst we want students to return to as many of their routines including social activities as possible. The government has requested schools to advise parents to limit the number of different out of school settings providers they access, as far as possible.
- Where parents use childcare providers or out of school extra-curricular activities for their children, schools should encourage parents and carers to seek assurance that the providers are carefully considering their own protective measures, and children should only attend settings that can demonstrate this. There is more information available for parents/carers on the government website regarding this matter.

- **Government information for parents**

- The government has recently updated the guidance for parents. Below is the link for you to be able to access this information:
<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>

We understand that these changes may be unsettling and we have adjusted the curriculum to work with students on learning to learn strategies, mental health and wellbeing support and anxiety management particular in the first few weeks.

If you have any specific queries please contact the school on the 7th September 2020, when staff members will be available for telephone discussions.

We are looking forward to welcoming back all students to school next week. We have missed each and every one of them greatly.

Thank you for continuing to work with us during this challenging time.

Kind regards,

Emma Sullivan
Principal



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