



16 July 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

It gives me great pleasure to write my first letter to you as the new Headteacher of Longbenton High School. It is a privilege to have been appointed by the school's governors in February and to be entrusted with the job of leading such a wonderful school. Although not formally in post until September 1st, as the contents of this letter detail arrangements for the new term, I wanted to write to you now.

Many of you will already know me; I have worked alongside Mr Quinn as Deputy Headteacher here for the past 4 years. I love working at Longbenton and I have an unshakable belief in all our students. I am determined that the school builds on Mr Quinn's legacy, continues to flourish and maintains its position at the heart of our community. You will of course see some changes next year, but hopefully they will be welcome ones, centred wholly around the improvement of the quality of education for all students. I am looking forward to getting to know you all and supporting your child with their transition back to full face to face teaching in September, after what has been a very challenging few months.

Plans for full reopening

I am now in a position to outline the arrangements for the first week of term in September. As you will know, we have been carefully working through the government guidance regarding full reopening to all year groups, which include a set of protective measures which make up a system of controls. One of these - minimising contact between individuals and maintaining social distancing where possible – is one which schools are required to consider properly.

In order to meet these requirements and reopen safely, we will need to put in place two main changes: the creation of key stage 'bubbles', and a readjustment of the timings of the school day.

Control measure	What this means at Longbenton High School in September
Creation of 'bubbles' of an appropriate size	Students will be divided into key stage bubbles: Bubble 1: Key Stage 3, Years 7-9 Bubble 2: Key Stage 4, Years 10-11 Bubble 3: Key Stage 5, Years 12-13
Avoiding crowded corridors and reducing movement around the school	The school will be 'zoned' into 3 spaces, one for each bubble. This limits the number of different rooms students are taught in, will reduce general movement within the school, and prevent contact between bubbles. Different bubbles will have their own entrances/exits: Bubble 1 - Café doors Bubble 2 – Dining doors (enter through Year 7 'yard') Bubble 3 – Main front doors
Prevent contact between bubbles	Each bubble will have a different start and end to the school day and a different break/lunch time, to avoid the entire school population mixing at any one time. See changes to timings below.

Timings of the school day

Keeping bubbles separate requires an adjustment to the timings of our school day, so that we can stagger start and finish times and stagger lunch/break times. These are outlined below. Please also note that we continue to finish slightly earlier on Tuesdays.

The main points for parents/carers to note are the slightly different start and finish times for key stages:

	Years 7-9	Years 10 & 11	Years 12 & 13
Start time	8.35am (with tutor)	9am (go straight to Period 1)	8.35am (with tutor)
Break timings	10.30-10.45am	11-11.15am	11-11.15am
Lunch timings	12.15-12.45pm*	1.15-1.45pm	12-12.45pm
Finish time	3pm	3.30pm	3pm
Finish time Tuesdays	1.55pm	2.05pm	1.55pm

*Year 7 will initially have a slightly longer lunch, starting at 12pm, so that they can get used to our dining systems

First week of term

This September we will have a slightly slower transition back to a full timetable. This is primarily to give our new Year 7 cohort, who have not yet had the opportunity to see the school building in person, the chance to have some focused transition over the first two days. We also feel that it is important for other year groups to spend sufficient time with their tutor, understanding the changes that have been put in place before a full week of lessons begin the following Monday. Therefore, please note carefully the following arrangements for the start of term:

Monday 31st August: Bank Holiday (school closed)

Tuesday 1st September: Staff training day (school closed to students)

Wednesday 2nd September: Year 7 induction day (Year 7 only in school)

Thursday 3rd September: Year 7 induction (full day of lessons); NE12 6th form induction (8.30am-10.30am Year 12 induction; 1.30-2.15pm Year 13 induction)

Friday 4th September: Years 8-11 tutor half day (Year 7 not in school) 8.30am-11.15 for Year 8 & 9 and 12.15-3.00pm for Year 10 & 11 (students will have a break but there will be no lunch provision).

Y12 familiarisation visits for those travelling to George Stephenson High School starting at 9am

Monday 7th September: Lessons start for Y7-13

Please also refer to last week's letter (10th July) regarding reminders about uniform for September, school closure/contacts over the school holidays and results days <https://longbenton.org.uk/parents/newsletters>

I will be writing to you again at the start of September with more details about finalised risk assessments and details about how school will look and feel in the new academic year. Over the summer, school is closed to visitors in line with our Covid-19 risk assessment, which is being reviewed in line with government guidance in time for September. We may have to make further changes to our planning and respond to changes from government, so please check the school website and Twitter feed in the weeks before the start of term.

I hope you have a wonderful summer.

Yours faithfully,



Kelly Holbrook

Headteacher Designate