

15 July 2021



Dear Parents, Guardians

As ever, I hope this, my final letter to you for this academic year, continues to find you all safe and well.

Return to school in September

All pupils will return to school on Thurs, 2 September as planned. Please see the accompanying sheet outlining the timings of the school day that we will revert to on our return.

Despite the significant relaxation of the Covid controls, we aim to keep all that has been good about our current systems and so pupils will continue to enter the school site via their year group entrances. We also ask that all pupils continue to bring with them their face masks just in case the guidance on this changes, either over the summer or in our first half term. Please be assured, any pupil or staff member wanting to continue wearing their face mask, will still be allowed to do so.

The first two lessons on our first day back will continue from where we left off, in pupils' Learning for Life classroom, in their year group area with their Learning for Life class and teacher. This will give us the time to undertake our usual start of year procedures including our full and year group assemblies, distribution of timetables and welcoming our new Year 7 pupils.

We will then commence our usual teaching timetable from Period 3, with pupils no longer needing to be taught in their class bubble, but once again being able to move freely around the school following their normal timetable.

We will continue to have designated year group areas, designated year group outdoor spaces as well as designated year group dining areas where pupils can go at break and lunch to spend time with other pupils from just their year group.

We will also have communal areas around school where pupils can meet up with friends or family members from other year groups.

From Monday, 6 September, we expect to have our existing dining room and new Year 10/11 dining facility fully functioning, allowing pupils to order hot plated food to eat in. This will complement our current dining options which will continue to operate in the same way. Pupils can order their food as they currently do for 2 & 3 September, with the 'eat in' option being added in readiness to start on 6 September.

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Asymptomatic testing

As I'm sure you are aware, all pupils are expected to have two LFD tests conducted by the school when they return to school in September. Each test should be 3 to 5 days apart. We want as smooth a start as possible on our return, so to meet this requirement, we will collect pupils a class at a time, starting with Year 11, and test every pupil in school throughout Thursday and Friday, repeating the process on Tuesday and Wednesday the following week.

Future positive cases and close contacts

Crucially, moving forward, if a pupil tests positive, only that particular pupil will be sent home. Pupils who would normally be close contacts of a positive Covid case will no longer be sent home and required to self-isolate. Instead, they will be asked to take a PCR test. Close contacts will still need to be identified and contacted, but from 19 July this responsibility will move from schools and colleges to NHS Test & Trace.

Looking ahead

It is important to remain aware that this is not an all-or-nothing situation and therefore a system of controls will remain in place from Government, including the flexibility for example, to reintroduce more stringent measures in the event of local outbreaks of coronavirus. However, whilst we are not fully out of the woods yet, and the progress of the virus will continue to be closely monitored in the autumn term and probably beyond, we sincerely hope that our return in September can mark an important step towards a much more settled educational experience for our young people.

Finally

I remain deeply grateful for the contributions everyone in our school community has made; staff, governors, parents, and pupils themselves, to do our very best despite the ongoing challenges presented to us by the pandemic. I remain proud that the staff here at Priory, our pupils and you as parents and guardians, have gone above and beyond in rising to those challenges collectively, together, and we remain grateful for the role you have played in supporting your daughters and sons during this most difficult of times.

As we start to look towards our summer break, I hope all of us can once again recognise the scale of our achievement in ensuring pupils have continued to feel supported both academically and pastorally during this period.

On behalf of all of us here at Priory, I offer my sincere thanks for everything you have done and for your continued support for us as a school.

We wish you all the very best for a happy, safe, and healthy summer break and we look forward to seeing and welcoming back all our pupils in September.

My very best wishes to you all.

Yours faithfully



Mr M Eastham
Headteacher