Monday, 13 July 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

I am writing to update you on the plans that we have for a full reopening in September 2020. The full guidance from the government on reopening can be found here:

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

In summary, we are following the guidance to ensure that:-

* Children, parents and staff are kept as safe as possible
* We are following a normal school day and offering a broad and balanced curriculum to all key stages

In order to follow government recommendations around social distancing and ‘year group bubbles’ we have made adjustments to the school day. These changes will revert to normal once the restrictions around year groups and social distancing are removed.

The adjustments allow us to reduce unstructured time during the day whilst giving students and staff the opportunity to have a break, lunchtime and use the toilets. This structure allows us to keep specialist teachers in specialist rooms and means that we can maintain 5 lessons in each day to ensure the curriculum is fully taught to all year groups.

**School day**

The new school day will be as follows:-

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | **7, 8, 12 & 13** | **9, 10 & 11** |  |  |
| Time | *Normal* | Whole day |  |  |
| Early | Late |  | *Students go straight to reg room when on site. Rooms open as soon as students are on site. SLT, HoY, DoFs on duty.* |
| 08:35 |  | Rooms Open |  |
| 08:50 | *AM Reg* | AM Reg | AM Reg |  |
| 09:00 | *P1* | P1 | P1 |  |  |
| 09:10 |  |  |
| 09:20 |  |  |
| 09:30 |  |  |
| 09:40 |  |  |
| 09:50 |  |  |
| 10:00 | *P2* | Break | P2 |  | *Early break (10.00 - 10.30 am)* |
| 10:10 |  |
| 10:20 |  |
| 10:30 | P2 |  | *Cleaning window (10.30 - 11.00 am)* |
| 10:40 |  |
| 10:50 |  |
| 11:00 | *Break* | Break |  | *Late break (11.00 - 11.30 am)* |
| 11:10 |  |
| 11:20 | *P3* |  |
| 11:30 | P3 | P3 |  |  |
| 11:40 |  |  |
| 11:50 |  |  |
| 12:00 |  |  *Cleaning window (11.40 - 12.10 am)* |
| 12:10 |  |  |
| 12:20 | *P4* |  |  |
| 12:30 | Lunch | P4 |  | *Early lunch (12.30 - 1.00 pm)* |
| 12:40 |  |
| 12:50 |  |
| 13:00 | P4 |  | *Cleaning window (1.00 - 1.30 pm)* |
| 13:10 |  |
| 13:20 | *Lunch* |  |
| 13:30 | Lunch |  | *Late lunch (1.30 - 2.00 pm)* |
| 13:40 |  |
| 13:50 |  |
| 14:00 | *PM reg* | PM reg | PM reg |  |  |
| 14:10 |  |  |
| 14:20 | *P5* | P5 | P5 |  |  |
| 14:30 |  |  |
| 14:40 |  |  |
| 14:50 |  |  |
| 15:00 |  | *Early finish at 3.10 pmLate finish at 3.20 pm* |
| 15:10 | Early Home |  |
| 15:20 | *Home* | Home |  |  |

**Keeping safe**

* There is a one way system in place to enable movement around the school site.  Students and teachers will be reminded to maintain social distancing while walking around the site.
* The one way system is also attached as an appendix to this letter. We will prepare a video walkthrough with commentary during the summer break and make this available on the school website.
* The school will be open to all students from 8:30 am. Please ensure that your child adjusts their school journey to arrive no earlier than 8:30 am.
* Students arriving by special transport will be met by staff in reception and will go to a supervised area.
* Once students are on the school premises they should make their way directly to their registration room where the doors will be open from 8:35 am.
* They must sanitise their hands on entry to the room and there will then be an informal 15 minute social time so students can talk to each other. The tutor will be in the registration room at all times to supervise the group.
* Morning registration then begins with the Bell at 8:50 am as normal and at 9:00 am students will move to lesson 1.
* Students move around the school site and teachers remain in their teaching areas; this enables us to use specialist rooms and facilities. It also enables the teacher to monitor the hygiene of their own teaching room.
* Students will be asked to sanitise their hands on entry to each classroom and when they cough or sneeze.
* All classrooms have been provided with wipes and sanitisation equipment along with lidded bins.
* Tissues will be provided in every classroom and toilet to support the catch it, bin it, kill it strategy.
* Teaching classrooms have been rearranged so that all desks are facing forward.
* All specialist lessons: PE, science, drama, technology, art and music have been risk assessed to make teaching within the specialism Covid-19 safe.
* Staff will be asked to stay 2 metres away from students in the teacher zone at the front of the room.
* Water stations will be available but students should wipe the filling nozzle before use and they will be cleaned between lessons.
* All toilets and door handles will be wiped and cleaned regularly throughout the day ensuring that a high standard of cleanliness is maintained. Toilets are equipped with soap and paper towels for regular hand washing.
* All classroom doors will be propped open to prevent cross contamination from door handles and to aid ventilation. Classroom windows will also be opened.
* Social areas will be allocated to year groups for break and lunchtimes. These have been staggered to enable a two year group and three group split on the staggered day.
* The cafe will be available at break and lunch times for a smaller menu of food. Where we have a three group rotation, a kiosk serving trolley will be provided and access will rotate on half term basis to ensure fairness between year groups and access to the café.
* All pricing in the cafe has been revised in multiples of 50 pence so that meals and meal deals are available at 50p, £1, £1.50, £2 or £2.50. Please ask students to bring the correct money each day for any meals to avoid change having to be given.
* Students can bring snacks or packed lunch to school but must eat these in the designated social group areas and not the cafe. The cafe has been divided into 2 halves to avoid mixing with the same food offer on both sides. It is available to food purchasers only and not a mixture of packed lunch students.

**Students**

* Please only arrive at the time you are expected e.g. between 8:30 am and 8:50 am.
* You will not be able to congregate in the yard or social areas before school but must go directly to your registration classroom.
* If possible please arrive in your year group bubble and please do not congregate in groups outside school or around school before school opening or after closing times.
* Please leave the school site promptly by the designated routes.
* Please wash your hands before and after you eat as well as using the hand sanitiser when you enter a classroom.
* Please wipe down your desk when you arrive in the classroom with the materials provided.
* Please follow the seating plan set by your teacher and do not change seats unless you are asked.
* Please wear full school uniform to minimise the borrowing of items. Try to be organized with the things that you need, pack bags the night before and reduce the likelihood of having to borrow anything in school that will then need to be sterilised or disinfected.
* Follow the one-way system as indicated. You absolutely cannot and must not stop on the corridors to talk to other students or arrive in groups.

**Parents and Carers**

* Please talk this letter through with your child and discuss the reasons for the changes and rules that are in place. Your support is very important to us and will help us to keep everyone safe. We know that this is a very worrying time for children but if you explain the reason for the rules that will help them to accept that they are important and must be followed.
* Please do not congregate outside school to pick up or drop off children.
* Please do not drive onto the school site to drop off your child. If you are unable to drop off outside the school gates then the Waseley Hills Country Park car park on Holywell Lane is an excellent alternative.
* Please do not drive onto the school site at the end of the school of the day and park in the car park to meet students. Arrange to meet them in one of the side streets at the end of the school day.
* We are sorry to ask this but please do not visit school unless it is absolutely necessary. If possible, ring us and we will make an appointment. We need to ensure that appropriate social distancing is achieved between adults.
* Please keep your child at home if they show signs of illness, have a temperature, a cough, a cold, stomach bug or a loss of taste and smell.
* Please inform us straight away if your child or other close family member is being tested or has received a positive test for Covid-19.
* Try where possible to provide food, snacks and water from home. Children in receipt of a free school meal will be catered for by the cafeteria service.
* Try where possible to ensure that children have had a good breakfast before they come to school. This will ensure that they are ready to start learning for first lesson as we will not be able to run the school breakfast service
* Please encourage your child to engage with the newly provided school email system. This enables them to contact their teachers and use the Microsoft Office 365 Suite without charge. This is vital, as should schools move to any further school closure, students will have access to Show My Homework, the school website and Microsoft Teams for online face to face learning.
* Please help us by supporting your child in any way you can at home with learning. This may be reading together and discussing, helping to learn facts and doing short ‘facts and knowledge’ tests or learning times tables. The website is packed full of subject specific activities and ways to develop the cultural capital that will help students to become independent and informed in our world.

**Face masks**

The current guidance to schools is that face masks are not needed. However if a face mask makes you feel safe and you want your child to wear one then this is acceptable. We ask that it is a plain face mask and does not affect them or anyone else’s learning while your child is in school. We also ask that if they choose to wear one and remove it then they place it in a sealed plastic bag and take it home. Please do not put used face masks in the classroom bins. I am still currently waiting for transport guidance on the wearing of face masks and students on buses. I will in update parents as soon as this information becomes available.

**Lost learning, teaching sets and curriculum planning**

At Waseley Hills a large number of our students have engaged in the online work set during school closure and the assessments that accompany the work. There will however be gaps in their learning and whilst we believe that we are in a stronger position than many students nationally, we would be failing our students if we did not accept that some intervention will be needed to help with their learning in some subjects.

In years 7 and 8 we have adopted mixed ability teaching sets rather than our traditional banding approach. We will send out details to all parents and carers via WEDUC during the summer break to confirm tutor sets for Y8 and Y11 as the tutor plus the room will change and students will need to know where to go on their first day back in September.

**Year 7 – Start date Wednesday 2nd September 2020**

It is very unfortunate that our New Year 7 students were not allowed to experience the normal transition process. We have dedicated the first day of school on Wednesday 2nd September to help address this and will spend the majority of the day on team building and social skills tasks. This is to help students to be comfortable in their new groups.  We recognise that the transition to high school with students moving to different classes for different subjects may be very daunting. That is why this year we have arranged a system to minimize those changes. In the first term Y7 students will largely be taught in the same groups throughout the curriculum but by specialist teachers.

We also realise that a great deal of time has been missed in Year 6 and there is an absence of Key Stage 2 standard attainment testing information. To help in gathering this information, we will be using GL Assessments in the first term. This will help by not only identifying gaps in students’ knowledge but also providing a baseline against other Year 7 students nationally and therefore help us to inform our planning to plug the gaps. We will then reorganise Year 7 teaching groups in December based on the information gathered from GL assessments. We have also set aside time in the curriculum to teach the social aspects of school and to try and help children with their anxieties. This includes not only moving to secondary school, but coping with the very different circumstances under which secondary schools now have to operate. We believe that practical subjects and creativity are vital and therefore we have ensured that we are teaching the full curriculum breadth to all your groups using our specialist teachers.

**8 - Start date Thursday 3rd September 2020**

Similarly Year 8 students have missed large parts of their key stage three courses and we have limited their mixing by ensuring that majority of specialist subjects are taught in the same set groups. Y8 have been reset into mixed

ability groups and this means that the teaching sets in Y8 will become the new tutor sets. Again, we will assess

during the autumn term and consider a reset for January 2021 teaching if possible. In a similar way to Year 7 students, we have set aside a block of formal pastoral teaching with a bespoke course. To address students’ fears and anxieties we will be helping them to address any lost learning by being very specific about what we teach and how we teach it. Needless to say this is still aimed at ensuring that we deliver the full breadth of the curriculum. Children have wide ranging talents and abilities and we believe in allowing them to experience and excel before making important choices at the end of Year 8 that will lead them into GCSE courses.

**Year 9 - Start date Thursday 3rd September 2020**

We have introduced a dedicated course in Year 9 which is specifically aimed at helping children with the learning they have lost in Year 8. This is important as it will help students to attain a balanced education at the end of Year 9 whilst still benefiting from beginning their GCSE subjects in September 2020. Senior staff have planned an excellent multi-skills course that will engage students and allow them to develop their cultural capital; it will also help to ensure that they don't miss out on any opportunities that would have been provided during Year 8. This will still allow sufficient time for the teaching of their selected GCSE option subjects and of course core subject time remains unchanged.

**Years 10 and 11 - Start date Thursday 3rd September 2020**

We are developing a Recovery Program to help students in Years 10 and 11 to cover the content of their GCSE courses and address any gaps. I will share more details of this program in the new term.

Fortunately, because current Year 11 students started their GCSE course in Y9 they have already covered 4 1/2terms of learning content and many subjects were well positioned to move into a bespoke suite aimed at supporting the strengths and weaknesses of our students with carefully planned revision from January 2021. We have also relocated the Year 11 mock examinations to the spring term starting near the end of January and running into February before the half term. This is to give the maximum length of time for course coverage and planned revision prior to mock examinations.

The government and Ofqual have yet to issue any final guidance on examinations for summer 2021 and as such, mock examination grades may play a vital role if teachers’ estimated grades are once again used for the purposes of awarding GCSE grades. We have also planned for both learning and revision using online face to face technologies should schools once again have to go into lockdown.

**Sixth Form students – Start date Thursday 3rd September 2020**

We will be delighted to welcome Year 12 students into school in September. This year we will be using the schools estimated GCSE grades as the entry requirement and the sixth form administration team have already been in touch with all of those students have applied to sixth form.  This is to confirm their places or have a further discussion on the subject choices. Year 13 students will also have mock examinations moved to late January running up to the February half term holiday.  This is to allow as much content, teaching time as possible plus thoroughly prepared revision sessions. For the same reason the Year 13 mock examinations become vital should teacher assessed grades become a requirement in awarding grades for A level examinations.

We look forward to welcoming all the students back into school in the start of the new term.

Yours sincerely



**Mr A.W. Roll**

**Headteacher**



