

17 July 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

## **Arrangements for the Return to School – Current Year 9**

I do hope that you and your families remain safe and well.

This has been a challenging period of time for us all and certainly a demanding time to be in education. I must acknowledge the incredible work of the staff who reacted so quickly to the changes that were needed to provide continuity of learning during this pandemic.

My colleagues have been totally committed to the students whether this is by providing remote learning experiences; enrichment activities; the delivery of laptops and learning materials; or through their pastoral care. They have kept in touch with each individual student through the assemblies, communications and weekly telephone calls. In addition, many staff have been on site supporting the children of key workers and some of our boys who needed to be in school for further support.

Some events have continued, albeit virtually, and if you attended the Virtual Summer Arts Festival last week you will have enjoyed the many outstanding contributions from the students (past and present) and the staff.

My thanks also to you for your support during these times. I am very grateful to you for working with us to do the best for your children. I am grateful too for the many messages of thanks that my colleagues and I have received throughout our partial closure.

### **Planning for a Full Return to School**

The government published a 35-page guidance paper recently regarding the full return of all students to school in September. Like all schools, we have been digesting this advice and endeavouring to turn the guidance into a workable plan.

For the past few weeks we have had Year 10 and Year 12 students in school on a rotation basis and it has been great to see them back in class. They have been totally respectful of our new safety protocols and this has given us the opportunity to ensure that we can operate safely whilst planning for the safe return of all students in September.

### **End of Summer Term 2020**

The end of this term is Friday 17 July, and the teaching staff will continue to set work right up to the end of period 5 on Friday. Please do ensure that your son/ward completes all of the work ahead of the summer break. Well done to him if he has managed to keep working throughout this difficult period and thanks to you for supporting his work.

Due to the nature of remote working, we will not be issuing an end-of-year report. However, we have monitored evidence of work completed and will use this to inform planning for next term.

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## Enrichment Programme

The enrichment activities have been updated and will be available to our students throughout the summer on the school website. You can access them [here](#).

In addition, all of our students can now use our new and extensive online reading platform [here](#) where over 1,500 books can be accessed. Please feel free to visit this site and encourage your son/ward to enjoy the facility.

## Start of the Autumn Term 2020

Due to the pandemic and the new requirements on schools, we have made some changes to the original dates that were set for the start of term. We have planned a longer staff training programme to ensure that every member of staff is fully briefed on all aspects of our risk assessment and our new procedures, and that they are ready to welcome students back to school.

We are also going to run a safety briefing for each year group ahead of the full return to school. For our new **Year 10** students this will take place on: **Monday 7 September from 2.00 - 3.00 pm.**

Students should arrive at school between 1.45pm and 2.00pm in full school uniform. They will not need to bring any equipment for this session. The students need to arrive via the gates on Ridgeway Road where they will be welcomed by a member of staff and directed to the briefing area. Please do encourage your son/ward to walk or cycle to school, in-line with the guidance from government. If they need to use public transport, they must use a face covering.

Our new Year 7 students are having an extended induction at the start of term and to accommodate this, your son/ward will return to school on: **Wednesday 9 September at 9.25 am.** Due to the staggered arrival and departure of students the school day for **Year 10** will run from 9.25 am to 3.50 pm for the start of the academic year and until a return to a normal timetable.

I appreciate that these are different to the original dates and times that were planned but I do consider it vital to ensure that all members of our community and the school site are fully ready for the safe return of students to school.

## The Curriculum

You may well have read in the press the suggestion from the government that some subjects may be removed from the curriculum, in order spend more time focusing on core subjects. We firmly believe in a broad and balanced curriculum and whilst there will be some adaptations to our lessons, as we reintroduce our students to school, our fundamental commitment to a full curriculum for our students remains in place.

Our desire is to see learning return to normal as soon as possible. We appreciate that students have been out of school for many weeks, so we will make sure we look after your boys as they get back into the normal rhythm of school.

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Part of this caring and compassionate approach includes our plan to embed Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education within the curriculum. These lessons are part of the all-round education to which your son/ward is exposed. PSHE is the curriculum subject that gives young people the knowledge, understanding, attitudes and practical skills to live safe, healthy, productive lives. Parents/carers have already received our consultation survey on the delivery of this subject.

### **£725,000 Improvement Bid Successful**

You may have seen that our bid for funds to increase the space for dining, to refurbish the kitchen, install a Sixth Form study area and provide new drama and music suites, has been successful. We are delighted to have secured these funds which will greatly enhance our estate. We hope that work can begin in August and we will keep you updated with developments. Read more information on the school website [here](#).

### **The School Shop, Uniform and Stationery**

Our shop is fully stocked with school uniform, PE & Games kit, equipment and stationery. The shop will be open during the summer and we will be sending a separate communication to you so that you can book a timeslot to come into school to make your purchases. In advance of this, you can view the items for sale on the school website [here](#).

Because of the pandemic, it is even more important that every student has their own set of equipment for learning. You will be able to buy a basic set from the school shop and we will be checking that students are properly equipped at the start of term. Please do make this a priority ahead of the return to school.

### **Further Communications through the Summer**

You will realise that we still have a great deal of work to do this summer ahead of next term. So that you remain informed, there will be a series of communications throughout the summer break. The communications will include a guide to the safety measures that are in place in school. Please do watch out for further information by email, on the [Twitter feed](#) and on the [school website](#).

My colleagues and I cannot wait for the start of next term and we very much look forward to welcoming your son/ward back to school in person. In the meantime, thank you for your continued support and I wish you all a very good summer.

Yours sincerely,



**Euan Ferguson**  
Headteacher