

SCHOOL TRANSITION AND RETURN ARRANGEMENTS FOR SEPTEMBER 2020

As you all know, the government published its guidance on how schools might operate from September. You can find the guidance here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

Further guidance for parents has been released and 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#arriving-and-leaving-school-or-college>

The guidance for parents was released after our plans were constructed but it will be apparent that we have made provision for all aspects of it.

As anticipated, there was a commitment to getting all pupils back into school but thereafter, on the whole, it was up to the school to manage this process with an understanding of their own context. We would recommend you read the government guidance in conjunction with the school information to understand fully how we intend implement it the best we can. It is important to acknowledge that these plans remain in draft form in case we receive further changes from government guidance. The information we include here details the school's 'direction of travel' and our aim to ensure children and staff can return as safely as possible to Townsend in September. It is not a definitive guide but it provides a framework as to what we hope will work for all parties. We will be sending out further guidance/details later in August through parentmail and this will also take on board any changes to government guidance.

TRANSITION BACK TO SCHOOL

We believe that each year group needs time, space, care and attention to transition back to school. Ideally, this would have taken place over several days but in order meet government guidelines, so that a full teaching timetable can be provided for all students in all years as soon as possible, we have only provided each cohort with a 2 ½ hour transition session. Year 7 and Year 12 have longer programmes to support with Induction. The programme for transition is detailed below. Each transition session will include; a welcome back to school, time with form tutors, a briefing about the revised arrangements for teaching and learning and movement around the school, time to collect locker contents, issuing of new timetables and time with peers.

TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
STAFF ONLY	1.00pm – 3.25pm Year 11 and Year 13 Welcome and Transition	9.00am-11.30am Year 8 Welcome and Transition 1.00pm – 3.25pm Year 10 Welcome and Transition	9.00am – 3.25pm Year 7 Welcome and Induction 9.00-12noon Year 12 Welcome and Induction 1.00pm -3.25pm Year 9 Welcome and Transition

Students will be met at the front of school

PROTECTIVE BUBBLES – ‘MINIMISING CONTACT’

As is recommended in the guidance, the school intends to keep year groups both in protective ‘bubbles’ and in designated areas of the school. The school is doing what it can to reduce contact between students in different year groups, to reduce movement around the school and to minimise use of shared spaces and equipment. To that end, students will remain in their year groups throughout the school day. Each year group will be designated an area of the school and from arrival through the school gates students will have routes to and from their area that will minimise contact with other year groups (please see table below). Where possible, students will remain in their classroom(s) and staff will move around the school. Each designated year group area has its own toilets for boys and girls as well as an IT area. Students will be kept apart at lunch and have a designated outdoor area. The canteen will be a shared space but students will not eat or sit in the canteen. Lunch will be collected and taken to eat either outside or in the designated area.

We are still trying to make contact with Herts Catering Limited to establish their plans for lunch but the school will be recommending ‘cashless’ usage. Although students will have access to their lockers as part of our transition programme, thereafter, students will not have access to them as other year groups will be using specific areas of the school. Students should bring one bag into school with their school equipment that they need for one day at a time. Equipment cannot be borrowed and will not be loaned out. To help facilitate Physical Education lessons taking place, on the days when students have PE they need to come to school and go home in school PE kit. Provisionally each year groups designated areas are as follows:

Year group	Designated learning area	Designated outdoor space
7	Mathematics	Lower court
8	Languages and ‘tower’	Left half field
9	English block	Quad and field behind discovery centre
10	Humanities corridor	Upper courts
11	Science block (Art room/DT for those options)	Right half of field

TRANSPORT TO AND FROM SCHOOL

The government acknowledges that keeping students in their ‘bubbles’ whilst travelling to and from school will be difficult, particularly when using private or public buses. As you know, this applies to Townsend as so many of our students are reliant on buses to get to school. We assure parents/carers that, where they are willing to engage, we are working with transport companies to help them meet the guidelines set out in the government guidance above. We have also made contact with Hertfordshire County Council and have established that they are releasing further guidance this week. We will communicate the findings of this guidance and the discussions we have had with the Local Authority and the transport companies in our August update. Our private bus companies have already put in place the necessary amendments to meet the guidance and the school will assist them with the arrangement of pupils on the bus nearer the time. However, though hopefully it is clear the school are doing everything possible to be supportive, parents/carers must be aware that there will be risk when using public transport and you must risk assess yourselves the extent of that risk. More guidance on traveling to and from school can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers>

Furthermore, all parent/carers, regardless of whether they are using public transport or not, must take responsibility for the safety of their children, to and from school. The school will do all it can once students arrive to maintain the protective bubbles but parent/carers are ultimately responsible for their child's safety outside of school hours. To this end, we ask that parents read the government guidance carefully and support the school by discouraging their child from using shared spaces, such as the shops on High Oaks, that will threaten the integrity of our 'protective bubbles' or from unnecessary socialising with students outside of their year group. We also ask that, wherever possible, parent/carers support the school with the use of phased arrivals. We acknowledge that for many of you, those with siblings, those with incompatible work commitments or those reliant on public transport that this will be difficult.

PHASED ARRIVALS

Year groups will be allocated periods of time in which we recommend they arrive at school that we hope will minimise contact between different year groups. There are 30 minute slots where each year group is paired with another whose designated area of the school is diametrically opposed to the other. This will facilitate the streaming of students in to different routes to their designated area, meaning that, as they enter the school gates, the protective bubbles are established. Alternative arrangements for breakfast club are being finalised but there will be provision and it will be in each year groups dedicated area of school. Please see the document 'draft school day structure' to see how those year groups are allocated. Again, we recognise that these arrangements will not suit everyone and if parents/carers are unable to facilitate arrival at these times students should arrive as near to the time as possible. Only those students in year 8 and 6th form should arrive after 0900.

THE SCHOOL DAY

If you have not already, please see the draft proposal for the school day. You will have noticed that we have tried to maintain our existing curriculum and timetable. As already mentioned you will have noticed that form time/collective worship has been moved to the start of the day to help with the phased arrival. From there the pupils have 3 lessons, made slightly shorter to allow staff movement from one lesson to the next, without a formal break, followed by lunch. Lunch comprises of three distinct sections:

1. Time to collect lunch
2. Time to eat lunch and to have free time indoors
3. Free time in a designated area outdoors.

These times will not be optional or negotiable and all students in each year group will follow the same pattern.

THE CURRICULUM AND TIMETABLE

The school are fully committed to the maintenance of a broad and balanced curriculum. Just as we have shown this commitment by ensuring all subjects, and not just core subjects, have had sessions with year 10s and 12s during the first phase of school reopening, we now want to ensure that all students have access to all subjects in this second phase. As shared spaces and equipment are to be minimised all lessons will, from September, take place in classrooms in each year groups' designated area. This policy will be reviewed after the first few weeks, or if government guidance changes before September. Nevertheless, staff, and subject leaders, in areas such as Art, Drama, Design and Technology and Music are busy rewriting schemes of learning to provide

the best, and most creative, learning experience for our pupils under these circumstances. Some Year 11 lessons for the subjects mentioned may take place in the subject areas.

LEARNING AREAS

Parents should be aware that the notion of 'protective bubbles' replaces the necessity for social distancing within those bubbles. Therefore, students will be sat together at tables and classrooms will not be organised with social distancing in mind. That said, classrooms will be organised in lines so that students do not face each other and students will be sat, as much as possible, in the same seat each lesson to reduce the potential exposure to anyone with the virus. Teachers will remain two metres apart at the front of the class wherever possible and all students must respect this space. Failure to do so, or to in any way unnecessarily increase contact and risk, may result in students being asked to be collected or, in severe cases, excluded. As discussed later, social distancing should still be observed wherever possible. There should be no touching or physical contact between students at all.

SCHOOL SITE

Students will be aware that, even before the outbreak of Covid-19, our maintenance and cleaning staff already circulated throughout the day cleaning highly used areas, such as the toilets. Once the outbreak began students will have noted the increased presence of our cleaning team wiping down high contact points, such as door handles and tables and this will continue with as much frequency as we can. Although our cleaning teams have been working and will continue working diligently to protect us all through more frequently cleaning, each member of our community should also take responsibility for their own safety and that of others. Frequent handwashing and/or sanitising will have the greatest impact on keeping us all safe and all members of our community must participate in the below.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

In order to keep the community safe, we are asking everybody to operate with the mindset that other countries have asked their citizens to adopt. Rather than assume others have the virus and taking necessary steps to avoid them, we are asking everyone to assume that they are contagious and to consider all necessary steps to avoid infecting others. Therefore, we ask all students to wash their hands regularly, but particularly on arrival and departure and after breaks and lunch, be self-sufficient throughout the day and perhaps most importantly, respect people's personal space. Although students may be sat near 1 or 2 individuals during lessons at all other times, where it is possible, students should remain at a safe distance from each other and from staff members. No student should be touching, hugging or holding other students and all should respect the 2m distancing from adults. Students must respect staff authority and, if asked to move or keep apart, must comply. Students must also adhere to the safety arrangements put in place at lunch, during school entrance and as they are leaving the school site. If any student behaves in a way that is reckless or through their actions deliberately puts others safety at risk the school will contact parents/carers to arrange for an immediate meeting. The school's behaviour policy is being updated to reflect the school's amended arrangements and it is important that before the new term starts you discuss behaviour expectations with your child. We are confident in September that both students and staff will adapt to the revised arrangements in school and will work collaboratively to make them work.

PPE

Students may wear PPE if they wish. At the time of writing, government guidance suggests that students should not wear it and that it may be counterproductive due to more frequent face touching. However, we feel that each member of the community, as part of their own risk assessment, should be free to decide whether or not they wear a face mask or other necessary PPE. However, if students misuse their PPE, or fail to dispose of it responsibly, then the school may insist that those students do not use it. Those using either the private or public buses will need to wear a face mask whilst on the bus. Again, if guidance on this issue changes, or the school changes its position on this issue, then we will notify you in the August update.

SICKNESS AND ABSENCES

It will be important that parent/carers also do everything possible to protect the whole school community. Ultimately, we ask that parents/carers follow the guidance in relation to being infected or showing symptoms of the virus. Hertfordshire County Council have produced a useful flowchart (attached) but we are asking all parent/carers to err on the side of caution. Students showing any symptoms at home must stay at home, if in school those students will be isolated and parent/carers must collect their child immediately.

BEHAVIOUR AND PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

The school will be updating its behaviour policy and this will be issued as part of the Autumn update. However, it is important that all parties understand that there will be very little tolerance towards behaviour that either consciously or unconsciously puts others in the school community at risk. Where it is felt a student has consciously endangered others, or has created risk through other irresponsible behaviours (such as fighting for example) it is likely that they will need to be collected and that there will be further sanctions.

VISITING THE SCHOOL SITE AS A PARENT/CARER

Once again we ask that all parents/carers do everything possible to minimise contact with each other and staff. Inevitably, we understand that, in some cases, parents /carers will want to have a meeting with a member of staff and indeed we may wish to ask parents/carers to come for a meeting ourselves! However, we do ask that parents/carers only come on to the school site by invitation. If you wish to have a meeting, please call reception on 01727 853 047 and someone will get back to you and assess whether an onsite meeting is the most appropriate way forward.

Thank you for reading this information and the supporting documents attached about our plans for September. We hope the framework and our direction of travel makes sense to you and that you are reassured we have tried to implement the government's guidance in the best way possible for our Townsend community.

Should you have any queries, or need any part of this draft and preliminary plan clarified, please use the Year email address to contact your child's Director of Learning in the first instance and we will endeavour to get back to you as soon as possible.

Although we have carried out risk assessments as required and created plans that we believe are as safe as they can be, we would urge you as parents/carers to carry out your own risk assessment around your child's travel and their return to school. The government guidance is clear about children returning to school full time in September. We have provided a plan to do this and would very much like to work with you to now implement it so our young people can return to some level of normality, reconnecting with each other and the school.