



MAIDEN ERLEGH

CHILTERN EDGE

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Dear Parent/Guardian

I am writing to you to outline our plans for the school re-opening next week. **Please be reminded that Year 7 return on Thursday 3rd September at 8.40am and all students are with us Friday 4th September at 8.40am.**

I have waited until the end of this week to write as you will know from seeing the news that there have been a number of shifts in the government position on what schools can and can't do so I felt it was prudent to wait until I was as sure as I could be that nothing else will change. In making our plans we have read government documentation, consulted amongst our staff, read union guidance and worked closely with other members of the Trust to ensure that we are providing a safe environment to return to school for students and staff alike. Parents should note that all schools have constructed slightly different plans based on government guidance that fit with their own particular physical context, staffing constraints and school transport situation.

From a parental point of view please can I encourage you to maintain a robust hygiene regime at home, regularly washing uniform, promoting regular and thorough handwashing and encouraging your child to maintain social distancing in all public situations.

In summary, here our plans:

Curriculum

We have endeavoured to keep our broad and balanced curriculum. No subjects will be removed from the timetable; however, we will adapt the curriculum delivery to meet guidelines. For example, the unit on singing in Year 8 Music has been moved into the summer term, Dance will not involve any group or paired work, PE will not include any contact sports initially. Each subject that involves the use of practical or shared equipment has written a risk assessment that has been evaluated and approved by the Trust. Staff in subjects such as Art, Technology and Science will be given specific training by the Trust in health and safety so as to ensure that hygiene procedures are followed.

School groups

The students will be divided into Year 7, 8 and 9 and Years 10 and 11. These two groups will use separate entrances, separate toilets, changing areas and have separate social areas. The students will be met each morning as they arrive and will be guided to their allocated entrance.

Cleaning materials and PPE

Each classroom will contain a kit that will allow rooms to be cleaned between lessons and the ventilation of each room will be a priority. Students will be given hand sanitiser as they are welcomed into the classroom and textbooks will be wiped down after use.

Seating

Seating will be facing the front so that the students are not facing each other and we will attempt to keep teaching staff to a distance of 2 metres from the students.

Face masks

While the government is not recommending face coverings are necessary, schools have the discretion to require face coverings in communal areas if they believe that is right in their particular circumstances. As we have been able effectively to zone the school to keep year groups apart, we will not require face coverings in communal areas, **but staff and students may choose to wear them. If students do wear face masks**

in school they should be plain, without comic patterns, motifs or photographs. Masks and face coverings should be worn correctly and used appropriately whilst in school.

In line with government advice, it will not be necessary to wear face coverings in classrooms, where protective measures already mean the risks are lower, and where they can inhibit learning.

Please can you ensure that if your child is using face covering or face mask they should ensure they have enough face coverings to last the full day in school including transport to and from school if they are choosing to wear it at this point. Any re-useable face coverings should be taken home in a plastic bag for washing.

Furthermore, the government will advise additional measures are taken in areas where the transmission of the virus is high. In these areas, defined as areas of national government intervention as [listed on gov.uk](#), the government's guidance will state face coverings should be worn by adults and pupils in secondary schools when moving around the school, such as in corridors and communal areas where social distancing is difficult to maintain. At present, South Oxfordshire or Reading are not part of a designated "area of national government intervention" but of course, this may change in the future. If that happens, we will contact you again.

Behaviour

May I remind you that we have updated our behaviour policy to cover the coronavirus outbreak and there is a link to this document [here](#)

Equipment

In accordance with our 'Tools for Learning' initiative all students must bring in their own equipment so they can learn independently in the classroom. This is even more important given that students must not lend each other equipment.

Cleaning

We will have a cleaner on site each day who will clean high frequency touch points during lessons such as door handles and toilets each hour.

Travelling to school

Whilst we would ask you to consider travelling to school by an alternative method to public transport in the next few weeks I know this is not always possible. Please note that face masks on school transports are not currently compulsory, however we would recommend that they are worn.

Attendance

In July the government published expectations that attendance to schools will be mandatory in September. This was communicated to parents on July 17th. In summary, only those students who are complying with clinical or public health advice (the 'extremely clinically vulnerable') should be staying at home in September. Mrs Benham, our Pastoral Assistant Headteacher, will be working the small number of families that this applies to.

Uniform

As per the DFE guidance it is expected that students will be wearing full uniform on their return to school. Please can I ask that as parents you support this matter in full. We will still expect students to wear our substitute items if they arrive in items such as black trainers. These items will be cleaned and kept for 72 hours before being lent to anyone else.

Canteen and lunch arrangements

The canteen will serve only 'grab and go' food to reduce the time students spend in the canteen.

We have modified the school day a little to allow for the two key stage bubbles to access the canteen for lunch at different times and remain separate. Lunch 1 will be after period 2 (11:05 – 11:35) and Lunch 2 will be after period 3 (12:35 – 13:05). Unfortunately, in order to keep the 'bubbles' separate we will not be permitting students the opportunity to use the canteen when it isn't their allocated lunch and parents may want to discuss with their children either the purchase of an extra snack from the canteen or bringing in a snack from home to cover the time that is not their allocated lunch

Movement around the school

We will have a strict one-way policy in some areas of the school and where this is impossible lessons will finish 3 minutes early to allow for an exit that avoids two-way traffic.

Parental visits to school

Please can I ask that parents always contact the school in advance of any visits so that we may reduce the number of visitors to school and support these visits with the required social distancing. Should you need to drop something off at school for your child that cannot wait until the end of the school day (e.g. medicine), please contact reception first who will advise you on the protocol for this

Sports Fixtures

Whilst sports practices and clubs will be occurring for the next few weeks we will not be participating in any school fixtures until October half-term.

If a child becomes ill

Children **MUST NOT** come to school if they, or a member of your household, have symptoms of coronavirus. Tests will be available, via the NHS, to staff and children should this happen – please ensure you inform the school of the outcome of the test prior to returning. If your child is due to come into school and is unwell, please report it in the normal way.

If any students develop coronavirus symptoms during the school day we have allocated an isolation room. Any families that have been in contact with a student who has coronavirus symptoms will be informed and we will give you clear instructions of the process whilst we wait for the results of the test.

I realise that there will be some anxiety about returning to school next week, but I am confident that we have done all that we can to ensure that the correct measures and procedures in place to minimise the risks. We will regularly review these measures over the next few weeks to reflect both the application of our guidance in school and any changing government advice. It is now imperative that as a school community we pull together as a team and follow our main aim of getting the students back into a safe, functional educational environment focused upon their academic progress and welfare.

I look forward to working with you across the next academic year.

Yours sincerely,



Andrew Hartley
Headteacher