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# YATELEY SCHOOL



Learning together – Empowered for life

17<sup>th</sup> July 2020

Dear Parents and carers

I am so pleased to be able to share with you the main elements of our plans for full opening in September. We really welcome the opportunity to open fully in September 2020 and are very well aware of how important it is to get our young people back into school, engaging with their friends and flourishing academically. I also recognise the very important part that we will play as a school in the public health imperative to minimise the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19). Our plans for the school are comprehensive and complex, given the size of the operation and with seven year groups to cater for. That said, in our planning, we have strived for simplicity – a simple plan is likely to work! We are aiming to strike a balance between the two equally important priorities:

1. Reducing the spread of coronavirus – by a) promoting and maximising good hygiene habits and b) reducing transmission risk
2. Providing a full, broad and balanced curriculum for students, including excellent pastoral care

Throughout our planning we will be guided by the following principles which have governed our planning throughout this pandemic:

1. We will put first the safety and health of all students, staff and families
2. We will place explicit focus on the emotional and psychological wellbeing of students and staff
3. We will deliver a full, broad and enriching curriculum
4. The plan must be sustainable and practical

The Government has stated: *'Given the improved position, the balance of risk is now overwhelmingly in favour of children returning to school. For the vast majority of children, the benefits of being back in school far outweigh the very low risk from coronavirus (COVID-19).'*

The guidance we have been given from the Department for Education has been thoroughly scrutinised and we have developed an approach that, we believe, suits our students, parents and staff. At the moment this is our plan, but it may be subject to change if further guidance is given stating we need different measures to protect those in the school. We will keep you updated via the school email/school website and will ensure that you are informed and involved. A video guide for the students will also be created to get them ready for September and the changes that are being implemented. We will send all of this out before the start of term. For Years 8-13, term starts on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> September with staggered arrival times. On the first morning, Students will be based in their tutor bases with their tutor getting used to the “new normal” and re-establishing relationships with staff and their classmates. Year 7 and 12 students have an induction day on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> September. Detailed timings and further instructions will be published shortly for both days.

As you may well be aware, a key part of the national strategy is keeping children interacting only with their own year group; the so-called ‘bubbles’. From September, a bubble will include all students within a year group, but strict measures need to be in place to minimise students interacting with others in different year groups.



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**Attendance** at school will be compulsory for the vast majority of children. The government has relaxed the rules on attendance during lockdown. However, this will change in September. The government guidance says: *'Missing out on more time in the classroom risks pupils falling further behind. Those with higher overall absence tend to achieve less well in both primary and secondary school. School attendance will therefore be mandatory again from the beginning of the autumn term.'*

### Student Arrival:

The government advice suggests that walking or cycling to school is preferable wherever possible. If students are brought in by car, can we please request and suggest that drop off **is not** on the school site, or on School Lane. The probability of traffic congestion would be too high. Please make your own arrangements and help us by making the students walk the last little bit!

On a typical day i.e. from Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> September onwards, students will be expected to follow a strict entry routine into school at the start of the day, sticking to exact times and venues please.

- Year 7                8.35am                Main gates
- Year 8                8.40am                A Block gates
- Year 9                8.45am                Main gates
- Year 10              8.50am                Bus bay gates
- Year 11              8.55am                A Block gates
- VIth Form          9.00am                Main gates

(Lymington Avenue gates closed)

### On arrival:

- Year 7 to C Block field – Year 7 zone and muster point
- Year 8 to A Block field – Year 8 zone and muster point
- Year 9 to C Block field – Year 9 zone and muster point
- Year 10 to Tennis courts – Year 10 zone and muster point
- Year 11 to A Block field – Year 11 zone and muster point
- Sixth Form – enter by main gates. Year 13 to lessons, Year 12 to C block field and muster point

At staggered intervals, students will be collected from the muster points by their first teacher and taken to their class. At no point will children enter or wander around the buildings unsupervised.

Students will be given their timetables on the first day in September. In order to minimise movement around site and therefore transmission risk, we will be operating a two week timetable, so instead of 6 x 50 minute lessons, we will have 3 x 1 hour 40 minute lessons. In other words the children will have the same curriculum and the same amount of curriculum time, but spread over a two week period.

An indicative timetable is shown below.

Week A (blue week) – Double periods = approx. 1 hour: 40 minute lessons.

Period	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1	Double – of period 1	Double – of period 1	Double – of period 1	Double – of period 1	Double – of period 1
(2)					
	BREAK (on field in year group zones)				
3	Double – of period 3	Double – of period 3	Double – of period 3	Double – of period 3	Double – of period 3
(4)					
	LUNCH (on field in year group zones)				
5					

(6)	Double – of period 5	Double – of period 5	Double – of period 5	Double – of period 5	Double – of period 5
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#### Week B (yellow week)

Period	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
(1)	Double – of period 2	Double – of period 2	Double – of period 2	Double – of period 2	Double – of period 2
2					
	<b>BREAK</b> (on field in year group zones)				
(3)	Double – of period 4	Double – of period 4	Double – of period 4	Double – of period 4	Double – of period 4
4					
	<b>LUNCH</b> (on field in year group zones)				
(5)	Double – of period 6	Double – of period 6	Double – of period 6	Double – of period 6	Double – of period 6
6					

The start and end of break and lunchtime will also be staggered to reduce the chance of students mixing with other year groups and teachers will always supervise classes to and from the muster points. During break and lunch the students will be fully supervised in their year group zones.

**End of day** 3.05pm (Years 7&8), 3.10pm (Years 9, 10 and 11). Sixth Form dismissed from classrooms. Year 7 escorted to main gates; Year 8 escorted to A Block gates; Year 9 escorted to Main gates; Year 10 escorted to Bus Bay gates; Year 11 escorted to A Block gates; Sixth Form teachers dismiss from classrooms at 3.10pm

**Hygiene** - Your child will be expected to follow strict behaviour rules relating to physical contact with other students, keeping their hands clean and following good respiratory hygiene through the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach. Students will be expected to use the hand sanitiser provided before entering all classrooms. It is very important that students clean their hands regularly; when they arrive in school, at the start of every lesson, before and after eating, and after using the toilet. Our hand-washing facilities are limited so we will have hand sanitiser in every classroom and teachers will require students to use this regularly. Parents/Carers could help us and their child by purchasing a small bottle of handsanitiser for their child to bring to school and use each day. This will not only help us maintain our stock, but will speed up lesson transitions and help promote personal responsibility.

We will ensure good respiratory hygiene by promoting the "catch it, bin it, kill it" approach. Again, I would encourage parents to ensure that their child carries a pack of paper-tissues to school.

**Enhanced cleaning** - cleaning routines will significantly intensified to allow for regular and continuous cleaning of key areas and contact points, particularly toilets.

**Classrooms** will need to be adjusted to meet the recommendations in the guidance with staff teaching 2m from students and minimising any 1 to 1 contact closer than this for the safety of all staff.

**Movement around the site** - A 'one-way system' will be in place in a number of areas around school along with keep-left systems. Where they exist, external doors will become the main entrance and exit for classrooms.

**SEND** - If your child has Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) a member of the team will contact you before the term starts to explain what provision will look like from September.

**Break/Lunch** - Our school kitchen will reopen in September, and lunches will be available again. However, the refectory will be closed; food will need to be pre-ordered the night before via a Google Form and both hot and cold food will be delivered to the Year Group muster zones. Students eligible for free school meals

will return to having their lunch at school, and will no longer receive lunch vouchers. Food will be only served at lunchtime. We recommend students bring their own breaktime snacks and water bottles whilst the canteen operates in this way.

**Equipment** - It will be more important than ever that your child has their own equipment in school to ensure that this does not need to be shared. We will not be able to provide students with items like pens and pencils so please can you ensure they are fully equipped for the day's learning. Students are unable to access lockers during this time but with only 3 lessons a day this should not be an issue. Can we also remind parents to ensure that students BYOD devices are fully charged each night and brought into school? It is essential that a considerable amount of work can be submitted electronically rather than handling exercise books.

**Uniform/PE Kit** - Students will be expected to wear school uniform. On days where students have PE, on current guidance they will be able to use the changing rooms.

**Behaviour** Impeccable behaviour and very clear expectations are vital to the safe and successful operation of this plan. Behaviour which compromises learning will be followed up with an adaptation of our current procedures. Behaviour which seriously compromises or flagrantly abuses safety procedures will face strict and immediate sanction. We have created a COVID-19 appendix to our behaviour policy to outline the changes – [CLICK HERE](#).

**Tutor Time** - Due to the changes in our timetable, we have regrettably had to postpone the normal tutor time provision. This will be reviewed, and the provision will be reinstated as soon as possible. In the meantime, the pastoral staff will still be able to see students via appointment systems and we will be sharing important and key pastoral information to students and parents via the weekly bulletin.

**Extra Curriculum** - We have taken the decision to halt all extra curricular activity where year groups are mixed and trips for Autumn Term 1 2020 (during the day, before and after school). However, this will be reviewed by the various staff leads during Term 1 to ensure that as soon as safely possible these can resume. There is the possibility of activities like Year 7 homework support in the library from 15.10 to 16.30 can take place but further details will follow on these.

**COVID-19 symptoms** - You must ensure that if anyone in your household has COVID-19 symptoms, your child does NOT attend school. Any child or staff member who develops symptoms in the school day will be sent home immediately. If anyone in your household, or your child, tests positive for COVID-19 you MUST inform the school.

**Face coverings** - The Department for Education tells us that its guidance around face coverings hasn't changed – that is, "they aren't expected to be worn by pupils or staff in school." Public Health England does not recommend the use of face coverings in schools. *"They are not required in schools as students and staff are mixing in consistent groups, and because misuse may inadvertently increase the risk of transmission. There may also be negative effects on communication and thus education."* Face coverings are required at all times now on public transport and in shops from 24th July

## Finally

Reading this letter, you might be forgiven for thinking that we are putting in place a lot of unnecessary rules, or that the usual atmosphere in school will be replaced by a draconian and joyless regime. Please be assured that this is far from true. I felt it necessary to set out, in some level of detail, our plans for September, but the following is also true:

- We have missed your children and can't wait for school to open fully again
- We are looking forward to welcoming our new Year 7 students into school and are excited to teach them, and all of our other students
- Much scaremongering has been said about "lost-learning", "catch-up" and even a "lost generation". Don't take too much notice! We'll address gaps, of course and work to reengage students quickly, but anticipate that we will be back on track very quickly. Our students are resilient and will cope. Our teachers have spent a considerable amount of time planning and adapting lessons. Your children will be fine.
- Although there are lots of new rules and measures, lessons won't feel much different. All of our students are following the full curriculum and their normal timetables. Classes aren't changing,

specialist rooms will be used, and students will be taking art, PE, technology and other practical subjects as they normally would

- If your child is in Year 10 or 12 and taking GCSEs/A Levels next year, Ofqual is currently consulting on some changes to exams in some subjects. Following discussions in school, we are broadly happy with the proposals and are confident that the majority of our students are on track. It may mean that exams are postponed until June/July and finish slightly later than planned (we don't know yet) so please don't book an early summer holiday just yet!

I would like to finish by thanking all of you. We've learnt a lot about remote learning and parenting over the last few months, and I certainly include myself in this category. We have tried to do our best to keep you up-to-date and informed, and to provide work and contact with your children. Thank you for putting in the hours sitting with them while they work (or try to) and dealing with their frustrations, anxieties and queries about subjects you probably felt you'd never have to learn about again.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. German', on a light-colored background.

Paul German

**Headteacher**