



1st September 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope that you and your children have had a restful and enjoyable summer holiday. I am writing to you to update you on the measures that the school will continue to have in place from September onwards to mitigate against the risks associated with COVID-19. These are, largely, determined by the guidance for schools from the Department of Education; this was updated in early July and then again in mid-August. In summary many of the measures that were in place in schools in the previous academic year will no longer be required, most notably the requirement to keep students in year group bubbles.

Students will no longer be required to avoid mixing in social spaces, when on bus transport and when moving around the school. In addition, contact tracing will no longer be carried out by the school and students will not have to self-isolate if they are identified as a contact by NHS Test and Trace; this will also be the case for staff who have been double-vaccinated. These changes will mean that there should be significantly less disruption to teaching and learning from September onwards in schools and reduce levels of absence from school caused by the need to self-isolate. In practice this will allow schools to operate in a relatively normal manner and much of the day-to-day life of the school should be able to return to normality.

We are returning, as you know, to the structure of the school day in place prior to the pandemic and we are also planning to move to a full extra-curricular and enrichment programme and this will include, where possible, trips and visits. More details about our extra-curricular provision will be shared with you from the start of term.

However, a range of COVID mitigation measures will continue to be in place from September onwards, these are outlined in an updated risk assessment which is available in the parent's area of the school website. In summary these are:

Enhanced cleaning and hygiene measures

Classrooms and social spaces will be cleaned at the start or end of the school day. Toilets and frequently used spaces will be cleaned more frequently during the school day including door handles and other surfaces that are regularly touched by people during the school day. Each room will have a hand sanitiser dispenser and students will be asked to use these throughout the school day. We will continue to ask students to sanitise desks at the end of lessons before they are dismissed from the classroom.

Teaching and learning

We will be able to return to taking in and marking exercise books from September, therefore your child will be able to bring their books home and complete assessments or homework that will be submitted for marking in their books. We will continue to ask students to use their own equipment and stationery

when in school, therefore it is important that they are fully equipped for school each day. We will be providing stationery packs for students who have Free School Meals. Students will continue to face the front of the class in the very great majority of lessons, with seating plans remaining in place.

The school environment

A one-way system will remain in place in parts of the school where there are particularly congested areas, this will include restricting access for students to the main building from the John Malloy quad area and a one-way system into the Deval building and around the rear of the gymnasium. Rooms will be ventilated by windows being opened or air conditioning being used where these are supplied by fresh air.

Face coverings

These are no longer required to be worn inside school buildings. However, we will continue to encourage students and staff to wear these when moving around inside and when in social spaces. We will also allow students to wear face coverings in classrooms if they wish to. It remains the case that students are expected to wear a face covering when travelling on public transport, therefore if your child travels to school by bus they will need a face covering in order to do so.

Testing

In addition to the two lateral flow tests that will be carried out prior to students returning to school in September, staff and students will be asked to continue with twice-weekly lateral flow tests until the end of September, at which point the Government will review this policy. We will be distributing lateral flow tests for children to take home during the first week of term.

We will be returning to a number of pre-COVID school routines and procedures from September onwards. The detention system for students who are persistently late for lessons will be reinstated, as will the relocation of students to other teaching rooms if they are disruptive during a lesson. A full catering service will resume with both the canteen and the snack shack serving food at break and lunchtime. Students will be allowed to enter the school buildings before the start of the school day but if they do so they are expected to go to their tutor rooms. We will also return to holding assemblies in the main hall, with a weekly assembly for each year group. I suspect that there will be a period of adjustment for all in the school community as we get used to a more normal school experience.

There is the possibility that in the event of a COVID-19 outbreak at the school additional measures may be required. These could include: increased testing of staff and students; the use of face coverings in communal areas and classrooms, limiting events such as residential visits; limiting parental attendance in school and live performances or assemblies. The decision to reintroduce any of these measures would be taken in consultation with public health agencies. It remains a possibility that attendance at school might be restricted for students and staff and if this were the case we would revert our remote learning arrangements. I will, of course, keep you fully updated with any developments that will impact on normal operation of the school.

As a reminder the first day of term arrangements are as follows:

Years 7/ 10/12 7th September - this is an induction day for these year groups with induction activities/tutor time during periods 1 to 3. Lessons will start for these years groups



OLDFIELD
SCHOOL

at period 4. Year 7 will go to the Main Hall on arrival and all other students should go to their tutor rooms

Years 11/13 8th September – all students should go to their tutor rooms on arrival.

Years 8/9 9th September – all students should go to their tutor rooms on arrival.

Yours faithfully

Mr Steven Mackay
Headteacher