



1<sup>st</sup> September 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

### **Year 7 Update**

It is not long now before we start the new school year. As promised, I would like to update you on your child's return to school in September.

Your child's first day will be Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> September. They will need to arrive between 8:20 am and 8:30 am and arrive through the gate by the caretaker's house – Sherwood Drive, lining up on the lower school playground. They will finish school at 2:50 pm. Staff will be around to guide students.

We recommend that your child either walks or cycles to school. There will be no access to the school grounds for cars or parents.

We highly recommend that where possible students should avoid the use of public transport, however, if this is unavoidable then it is important to follow the guidance provided by the government which can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers>.

The local authority have also developed a "Getting Your Child to School" guide which can be found at <https://www.stopswapgo.co.uk/>. To help reduce any unnecessary stress for your children, please look at this guidance in advance and discuss the advice with your child so that they are ready and know what to expect.

We have been working closely with our school bus provider (Fourways coaches) to accommodate the use of staggered start and finish times and to make travel to and from school as safe as possible.

If your child is travelling via the school bus then the following will apply:

- Passengers will be asked to sit in their 'year group' as far as they are able to on the bus to mirror their 'bubble' in school.
- Parents must ensure their child has hand sanitiser and use it before boarding and on disembarking.
- Parents to ensure children over 11 wear disposable face coverings while travelling on school buses – unless they are exempt.

There will be bins available at the entrances to dispose of these face masks.

#### **Hylands School**

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The morning school bus service will run as normal with a drop off time 08:10 at the front entrance of Hylands School; however, the afternoon service has changed and will collect students between 15:20 and 15:35. This may mean that some students have a short wait time at the end of the school day if they finish earlier than this.

Any student who uses the school bus but is required to use the rear entrance of the school in line with our Covid-19 risk assessment, will be accommodated at the front of the school. Any student who arrives early as a result of getting the school bus will be required to wait until it is their time to enter the school site.

The Chief Medical Officers from all four nations in the United Kingdom have made it clear that the overall risks to children from coronavirus (COVID-19) in relation to education settings is low and that the risks associated with not being in school certainly outweigh those of being in school. The World Health Organisation published a statement on 21 August about children and face coverings. They now advise that “children aged 12 and over should wear a mask under the same conditions as adults, in particular when they cannot guarantee at least a 1-metre distance from others and there is widespread transmission in the area.”

Nationwide, the government is not recommending that face coverings are necessary for all schools. We have taken the decision to encourage but not require our students to wear face coverings outside the classroom, as we believe it will be difficult to maintain social distancing in our corridors and social areas. In addition, on top of our hygiene measures and the system of controls recommended in the full opening guidance to schools, permitting the use of face coverings for students will provide additional confidence to parents to support a full return to school. We expect all students to provide their own face coverings. Students should not wear face-coverings in class unless there is a special reason.

It is vital that face coverings are worn correctly and we will be providing clear instructions to our students on how to put on, remove, store and dispose of face coverings, to avoid inadvertently increasing the risks of transmission. Safe wearing of face coverings requires cleaning of hands before and after touching – including to remove or put them on – and the safe storage of them in individual, sealable plastic bags between use. Where a face covering becomes damp, it should not be worn and the face covering should be replaced carefully. If students are wearing face coverings on their way to and from school, they should change their face covering before entering school.

You will appreciate that the guidance from Government is being constantly updated. We will let you know if our approach to the wearing of face coverings changes.

All students are expected to wear full school uniform. We will provide all students with a pack containing pens, pencils, rulers, etc which they will be given at the beginning of the day and will leave at school. Exercise books will be left in school. Homework will be expected to be completed online or on paper. If your child does not have access to the internet or a computer, please ask them to let their form tutor know on their first day.

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Each year group will be their own “bubble” and are stationed in their own part of the school. Some specialist lessons will take place in other areas of the school. This will then be thoroughly cleaned before being used by another group. Students will need to remain in their “bubble” throughout the day. This will be the same at break and lunch. We will still be offering hot and cold food. All food, including packed lunches, will need to be eaten in the designated areas.

We have hand sanitising stations around the school. We have appointed additional cleaners to work during the day to increase the cleaning of all areas. The one-way system is clearly marked out to reduce contact with other students. Breaks and lunch time will be staggered so that there will be a reduced number of students accessing food at the same time.

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.

Attendance at school. The government had relaxed the rules on attendance during lockdown. However, this has changed from 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.’

We will be continuing to follow social distancing guidelines and have an increased hygiene programme. Students will need to use hand sanitiser when they arrive at school, before and after food, after using the toilets and as they leave school. We have already changed our behaviour policy to reflect the expectation that students will need to abide by these rules. Working together, we will ensure that the school is as safe as possible for all members of the school community.

We understand that some of you and your children will be anxious about returning in September after several months out of school. If you have any specific concerns, please direct them, in the first instance, to their form tutors. Our pastoral team will be available to support all our students on their return.

We are very much looking forward to seeing all our students back in school.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Parry

Headteacher

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