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Dear Parents, Carers and Students

Outline plans for re-opening to all students from September 2020

I hope that you and those around you are well. The purpose of this letter is to give you as much detail as possible about our plans to re-open the school to all students from September. These plans, along with the risk assessment, have been completed with the Local Authority and the Governing Body, and follow government guidance for the full opening of schools:

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

It must be noted that the plans outlined below are subject to considerable change, in light of developments in national and local policy in managing the pandemic, and in light of our own school-level planning to provide the highest possible standards of education and care, whilst keeping everyone safe.

Plans for the start of the year

The 2020-21 academic year will begin as planned, with Wednesday 2 and Thursday 3 September as INSET days, and Friday 4 September will be an Induction day for Year 7 students only. I will write a separate letter to parents and carers of students joining us in Year 7 to explain particular arrangements for them. School will reopen to students in other Year groups through Induction days as below:

Monday 7 September: Years 8 and 11 Induction day

Tuesday 8 September: Years 9 and 10 Induction day

Induction days are necessary as we will need to spend a significant amount of time with each year group to guide them through some very different ways of working and learning together, as required by the government guidance referred to above. Some of those differences include:

- Staggered start, break, and school day end times for students in different year groups and other changes to the school day
- Zoned areas of the school by year group
- Changes to the way that lessons are organised and routines for learning
- Specific requirements regarding handwashing and student behaviour on the way to school, during break times, and on the way home from school

Changes to the school day

From September, the following timings will be necessary in order to continue to provide all students with a broad and balanced curriculum, whilst implementing government guidance:

Year group	Arrival time	Departure time
7	8.45 am (bottom gate)	3.10 pm (bottom gate)
8	9.00 am. (top gate)	3.20 pm (top gate)
9	8.45 am (top gate)	3.10 pm (top gate)
10	8.30 am (top gate)	3.00 pm (top gate)
11	8.30 am (bottom gate)	3.00 pm (bottom gate)

Bottom gate refers to the Boythorpe Avenue entrance

Top gate refers to the Hunloke Avenue entrance

We appreciate that these changes may cause difficulties for siblings arriving at school at the same time, and hope that you will be able to support our efforts to re-open safely to all students in September by ensuring that your child arrives at school at the allocated time to avoid gatherings of students of different year groups. If these timings present you with a particular difficulty that you are unable to overcome, please contact us at school.

Break times

We are of course mindful of the importance of a break and time for social interaction, but must ensure that we act safely and with due care and consideration in the interests of the safety of the wider school community.

Break times will be staggered throughout the day, with Year groups allocated specific areas to access a reduced canteen menu, segregated outdoor spaces and toilet and handwashing / hand sterilization facilities. We will be explaining the boundaries within which students can interact during break times during their Induction day.

Zoned areas by year group

Each year group will be allocated a zoned area for teaching and learning and break times. This is in line with government guidance to form year, group-sized, bubbles in order to reduce lines of transmission. We will explain what the zoned areas are and how they will work with students during Induction days.

Changes to the way that lessons are organised and routines for learning

Due to the need to stagger arrival, break and departure times, and deliver a broad and balanced curriculum, lessons will vary in length between each year group. All students will continue to have 5 hours of teaching and learning per day. Timetables will be issued to all students during Induction days.

You may be aware that we are required to organise classrooms so that all desks are forward facing and other transmission controls are in place to manage risks. As such, students will be predominantly be based in one classroom (Key Stage 3), or a small number of classrooms (Key Stage 4) throughout the day.

There will be a number of new or different routines that students will be required to follow, in order to ensure safety and continuity in learning for all. We will explain these routines in detail to students during Induction days, and will inform you of any changes to the school behaviour policy in due course.

Handwashing and use of hand sanitizer

Students will be required to either wash their hands or use hand sanitizer upon arrival at school and before and after eating at break times. Soap and hand sanitizer will, of course, will be provided by the school. Your child may bring and use their own hand sanitizer if you choose for this to happen, but we will be required to observe your child applying it at those times. Please inform us if you object to your child using hand sanitizer in school.

It is equally important that your child follows handwashing and social distancing guidelines when not in school. Please ensure that they wash their hands in line with government guidance upon arrival home, and when leaving home in the morning to come to school.

Breakfast club

Due to the requirements imposed by the government guidance, we are regrettably unable to provide a breakfast club in September as we have in previous years. We will keep this under active review and will inform you as soon as we are able to reinstate this important aspect of our provision.

ParentPay

Please can parents and carers of students in Years 8-11 in September ensure that you are fully signed up to use ParentPay and allocate money to your child's school dinner account for the start of term in September. It is very important that the catering system works quickly and smoothly to enable us to provide all children with food safely. Your support with this is very much appreciated.

Parental access to the school site

Due to the level of controls we are required to put in place, parental access to the school will regrettably be by appointment only from September until further notice. We are absolutely committed to working closely with you as partners in your child's education and safe development, and believe that this partnership can continue to operate effectively under these conditions. Therefore, please contact us to arrange an appointment if you need to meet physically with a member of staff. We will of course be available to deal with urgent matters, or matters that do not require a physical meeting, by telephone.

Traveling to school – transport and face coverings

Students should walk or cycle to school if possible, or be dropped off by parents/carers using their own vehicles. Parents and carers are kindly requested not to accompany their children to the school gates, in order to avoid unnecessary gatherings. Public transport should be avoided as much as possible. Where it is not possible to avoid the use of public transport, parents and carers should ensure that their children wear face coverings whilst travelling on public buses unless they are exempt, and provide them with hand sanitizer to use upon boarding and/or disembarking.

If staff, pupils or visitors arrive at school wearing face coverings, they should be removed and disposed of in a covered bin or if the face coverings are reusable they are placed in a sealed plastic bag to be taken home. After removing the face covering, individuals must wash their hand immediately.

Arrangements for students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Individualised arrangements are being made for students with SEND, which will be communicated separately to parents and carers as soon as they are finalised. Please contact us at school if you have any urgent concerns regarding our planning for wider re-opening.

Arrangements for students who become unwell

If students become unwell in school with symptoms of Covid-19, then they will be isolated in school until taken home by a parent or carer, who must then arrange for their child to be tested:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested>

and follow the 'Stay at home' guidance:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection#ending-isolation>.

As a school, we are required to ask you to inform us of when a test has been arranged to take place, and the outcome of that test once completed. If a student or member of staff tests positive for Covid-19, they must then follow the 'Stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (Covid-19) infection':

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>.

We must inform Public Health England of any positive test outcomes. Public Health England would then advise the school on appropriate next steps to manage risk.

What should my child wear?

Students should wear normal full school uniform to school, and bring their PE kit on days when they have PE. No students will have practical PE lessons during their first day back, so there is no need to bring PE kit on that day.

What should my child bring?

We will be providing all students with subject exercise books and text books, which will remain in school. We will also provide students with their own, personal equipment sets, which contain all items that will be required for lessons, other than PE kit. So:

- No unnecessary items should be brought in – stationery, student record
- Students can bring a water bottle and, if they are having one, a packed lunch into school
- Parents/carers **will not** be able to drop off items throughout the day if forgotten

What will happen at social times?

- Children will have a slot in their small class 'pod' to eat their lunch in designated areas (outside where possible)
- The canteen will operate a reduced service, so sandwiches, paninis, wraps, etc will be served to reduce the overall risk of transmission
- Access to, and movement within the canteen will follow strict protocols, to maintain social distancing and reduce risk of transmission

Will the staff be wearing face masks or other PPE?

- In general, no, though there may be circumstances in which this will be necessary. Staff will also be following strict guidelines to reduce the risk of transmission.
- Staff involved in First Aid will use PPE in the usual manner, with the addition of face protection. There will be a clear first aid protocol in place for staff to follow.

What other safety measures are being put in place?

- Robust handwashing will take place when students arrive in school, before and after social times, and when leaving school. To help us with this, please show your child how to wash their hands properly using the [BBC video](#) and make sure they have washed their hands properly before coming to school in the morning.
- Posters will be displayed by sinks to show how to effectively wash hands
- Staff and students will be encouraged to follow the Catch it, Kill it, Bin it protocol (with posters around school). Disposable tissue will be available in classrooms and staff areas and to be immediately disposed of following use
- Hand sanitiser and/or handwashing facilities will be available
- Classrooms will be ventilated as appropriate as much as possible. Doors (where practical) will be propped open throughout the day to reduce contact with door handles. Fire considerations have been risk assessed around this.
- Staff will maintain a 2m distance, so they will not be able to closely interact with students regarding learning
- Within lessons, students' physical proximity to others will be restricted to those in their own class (Key Stage 3), and those in their own Year group (Key Stage 4). Seating plans will be in place for all teaching groups, so that we have accurate records of any close proximity contact within student groups across the school
- During break times, students will be required to maintain an appropriate physical distance from each other at all times. This means that many 'normal' social time activities, such as ball games, will not be able to take place safely under these conditions
- Access to student toilets will be managed by staff to ensure safe use, and students will be strongly discouraged from using the toilets during lesson time. We will, of course, make appropriate arrangements for students with particular needs
- The school will be thoroughly cleaned at the end of each day
- Frequently touched surfaces throughout the school will be wiped down with antibacterial wipes and/or spray regularly

Will my child be safe?

Safety is our top priority and we will do all we can to mitigate risks of transmission of Covid-19 to staff and students. However, as I am sure you understand, there is no guarantee that these steps will prevent infection to any individual.

Our aim is to protect the staff and students from the virus and to limit any impact of it on staff, parents and children by adopting three key strategies:

1. Mitigating (where possible) contamination risks by embedding effective handwashing, hygiene and cleaning protocols
2. Mitigating (where possible) contamination risks by restricting the contact between groups and individuals
3. Extending regular cleaning opportunities to include periodic deep clean practices

How can parents/carers help?

Parents, under no circumstances, should send children to school if they or any member of the household have *any* symptoms indicating Covid-19 or when they or any other person in the household are required to isolate for other reasons (including shielding for underlying health concerns). NHS England define symptoms as:

1. Fever or high temperature (including 'hot to touch')
2. New, persistent cough
3. Loss of taste or smell

One thing that has stayed the same, even during these unusual times, is that the wellbeing of the entire school community is at the forefront of our minds. We are doing the best we can for everyone, given the information we have available. We will continue to adapt our approach in light of new guidance, changing conditions, and learning from experience.

We look forward to seeing all students back in school in September, and thank you, as ever, for your continued support.

Take care, and best wishes

Ben Riggott

Headteacher