

27 August 2020

Dear Parents,

**Return to School September 2020**

**Wednesday, 2 September - Year 7, New Year 9, All Year 12**

**Thursday, 3 September - Whole school returns**

I do hope you have all managed to have a restful summer.

I have started this communication many times during the course of the holidays, but with advice and guidance changing regularly I have waited to be in a position where we can share with you our procedures that will be in place for the start of term in response to the most up to date information published. There may yet be changes, of course, as this is a responsive situation, and we will review practices regularly; I will update you if and when we need to change our approach.

You will be aware that the Department of Education requires all students to be back at school full time from September in order to continue their education at school; at Borlase we are looking forward to welcoming our students back into school next week. To support the health and safety of all our students, staff and families the school has implemented a range of preventative measures which I will outline in this letter. I will also set out our response system in the event of a suspected or confirmed case of Covid 19 at school.

This is a very lengthy communication as there is so much information to share and it is important that all students, parents and carers have read it all before returning to school.

**Your cooperation**

In order for our systems to be effective and help protect everyone, we need the cooperation of everyone in our school community. Following the procedures set out, reinforcing messages with your children at home and communicating with the school as needed is vital for us to keep everyone safe. How your children behave outside school will also have an impact on the school's ability to keep free of the virus and therefore stay open for everyone. **I do ask you therefore to impress on your children the need to follow government social-distancing guidance outside school too, and of course to do so yourselves.**

**If you or your child is returning from overseas or an area where the infection rate is higher than Buckinghamshire, you must check and observe the government and World Health Authority rules on quarantine, and contact the school to let us know by Tuesday. If you are even slightly suspicious you may have symptoms, or that anyone in your party has symptoms, please get tested and stay at home. Students can join lessons virtually.**

## **Ensuring education is sustained**

At Borlase, our aim is to have everyone studying in school full time. However, we are also prepared for scenarios where this may need to change. We are confident that we can continue to deliver the curriculum successfully through Borlase@Home if needed and would revert to this in the event of students needing to work at home.

### **Scenarios**

- i) Full School Open, September 2020 - Current Expectation.
- ii) Individual Child at home in self isolation - log on to Borlase@Home
- iii) Year group/s bubble in self isolation - all students affected log on to Borlase@Home and lessons would be delivered through google classroom and google meet.
- iv) Full school closure - all students log on to Borlase@Home

In the event of a teacher needing to be in isolation, they would teach the students via Borlase@Home while students are in the classroom, supervised by a cover teacher (unless the teacher is unwell and the class would have cover teaching)

The Full Risk Assessment will be published on the school's website. However, in summary, these are the measures taken by the school to mitigate risk.

*It is important that students should not worry or feel anxious about any of these measures; they are precautions to look after them and we will talk to them and support them through understanding changes. These will soon become part of the routine and second nature to everyone.*

## **Prevention Measures**

### **School Organisation**

We have made a number of temporary changes to the school's organisation in order to limit the number of students who are in less than 2 metre contact with one another and the number of times students move to different spaces. Unlike primary students, secondary students need to study in specialist spaces and work with different students and teachers depending on their subject. To follow government guidelines on creating year group bubbles we are doing the following:

- Tutor Groups will be in year groups only.
- Lessons and any other activities\* will be in year groups only.
- House activities would be in year groups only.
- Assemblies will be virtual in form groups or small numbers of students in a large venue; there would be no singing in Chapel.
- The lunch hour has been replaced by two thirty minute breaks in the day; these are staggered with year groups having separate indoor and outdoor eating areas.
- There is a twelve minute changeover time for the two lesson changeovers; this allows us to supervise staggered movement around the school.
- (The sixth form will have access to the coffee shop, divided into year groups, all day. The sixth form will need to remain on the school site for breaks)
- Three marquees have been set up on the school site to enable year group eating areas and support some lessons.
- Additional time has been built into the day to allow for staggered dismissal at the end of the day.

## **The School Day**

The school day has been restructured from a five lesson day to a day with two longer lessons before lunch, and a normal hour-long lesson after lunch. To achieve this without students losing any curriculum time, we are operating a four week timetable. The 30 minute breaks will be during the longer lessons. There will be a staggered end to the school day. School starts for everyone with Tutor Time at 8.40 a.m. However, we ask students to enter school via their nearest gate, observing social distancing from students from other year groups and **wearing masks**. The gates will be open from 8.00 a.m. When they arrive at school they should go to a designated year group zone or if after 8.15 a.m., directly to their form room. See [School Day](#). Students can work independently at school until 4.30 p.m if pre arranged from Monday-Thursday. Parents will also be told separately about the Supporting Aspiration Programme.

## **Bags and Uniform**

By having a maximum of three different lessons in any day, students will not need to carry as many books/ files in their bags. All students must carry a fully-charged Chromebook/ laptop as work to be submitted for assessment will be completed electronically. Bags should be clearly labelled with first and surnames; I suggest something distinguishing too such as a ribbon/ key ring. Students will be asked to keep their bags with them at all times or place them in a locker. They will be permitted to take bags into classes and place under their desks rather than leave them in bag racks or outside buildings. Phones should be kept in bags and switched off as usual.

School Uniform should be worn to school. However, if a student has Games/PE/ Dance on their timetable, they should wear their Borlase kit to school for the whole day. This should include an outer layer (e.g. rugby shirt/sweatshirt and tracksuit bottoms) and under layer (polo shirt and shorts). School changing rooms will not be open for sports changing for lessons. Clothes should be washed regularly.

Outside coats and blazers should be placed on the back of the student's chair when taken off; coats can also be placed in a locker.

**New sixth formers can purchase school ties on the first day of term; please bring £8 exact cash.**

**The school uniform shop will be open in the Hall on Mondays and Thursdays from 3.30 to 4.30 p.m. for the first few weeks of term. Parents would need to call reception 01628500 to agree a time or students can go there independently.**

**Please ensure all clothing is labelled with first and surnames.**

## **Hygiene and Cleaning**

- The school has employed additional cleaning staff so that toilets and eating areas can be cleaned during the school day.
- The school will be cleaned every evening using HYCOLIN (antiviral surface cleaner) followed by a disinfectant -based product.
- In the event of a positive case, the school would be disinfected using fogging machines (Zoono)
- Around the school there are additional outdoor hand washing stations and hand-sanitizer dispensers for the students to use.
- Students should wash their hands regularly and at the very least, on arrival at school, before and after eating, after using the toilet.
- In every classroom there will be COVID 19 antiviral cleaning fluid, paper towels and hand sanitizer.

- All fire doors have mechanisms to hold them open and will automatically close if there is a fire alarm; other doors will be wedged open to reduce touch-points.
- All students and staff are required to carry a personal bottle of hand sanitizer and tissues.
- Students must be vigilant to managing coughs or sneezes (catch it, bin it, kill it)
- All students and staff are required to carry a mask\*\* in a clear, plastic bag.
- Students are asked not to share equipment.

### **Preparing Classrooms**

Although the classrooms will be professionally cleaned daily, they will also be cleaned between lessons. There is a twelve minute movement time between any class changeover. In this time, the teacher will spray the desks and chairs with antiviral cleaner and the students will have clean paper towels to wipe them. They will be asked to sanitize or wash their hands after this.

Windows will be opened in all learning spaces to keep fresh air circulating.

Students are taught with students from their year group.

### **\*\*Masks**

On Wednesday, 26 August, the government announced their decision that children in secondary education should wear a mask in communal areas such as corridors in certain areas of the country; headteachers can make a judgement otherwise. **We require** that students **do** wear a mask to walk into school and when moving around the school in communal areas such as corridors, toilets and the Canteen. We will explain to them how to keep their masks clean, when to use them and how to store them. Please, as parents, discuss this too. We ask parents to ensure children have washable masks with a minimum of three layers of protection and that these are washed daily. The masks and clear plastic bag should be labelled and students should keep them with them all day. We will also consider masks/ vizors for lessons and trial this with classes with their and your agreement.

If a student/parent wishes to request exemption from wearing a mask for medical reasons they should contact Matron.

### **Catering and Biometrics**

The school's catering company will be serving a range of hot and cold food during the two short breaks. The menu may be more limited for speed and we will gather student feedback on the most popular options. Students will have year group serving and payment stations and year group eating zones. Students will be asked to **wear masks** when queuing and paying for food; the catering staff will also be wearing masks.

Students should wash their hands before and after eating and there are hand sanitizer dispensers by the food payment stations.

We have changed the school's biometric system for payment and sixth form sign-in to a card-reader from fingerprint identification to avoid touch points. Students will be issued with cards on the first day of term.

Students should label their water bottles clearly with first and surname.

**Please make sure your ParentPay accounts are topped up for the start of term as the system is cashless. New Year 12 will be able to have ParentPay accounts set up in the**

**first week of school.** Cash will be acceptable only from new students in the first week. Please bring a plastic bag if you accept change and wash hands/ sanitize. I suggest you bring £1 coins.

### **Teaching and Learning**

- Students should label their pencil cases and not share equipment.
- If students are issued with text books/ texts, they would need to keep these and bring them to school as needed; teachers aim to use electronic textbooks where possible. Students should not share their copies of books.
- Exercise books will be used for student classwork, notes and other work not formally assessed. They would be asked to send electronic copies of work where it needs to be teacher-assessed.
- **All students need to bring a fully-charged Chromebook or laptop to school each day.**
- Teachers will teach from the front of the classroom and if they do need to come closer than 2m of a student, they will wear a mask.
- We ask students not to raise their voices and to maintain a calm learning environment.
- Students must remain in their seats in lessons unless otherwise instructed; they should respect everyone's personal space.
- Students must observe the social distancing instructions in relation to the teacher as teachers teach all year groups.
- Students in isolation at home should log on to Borlase@Home at 8.40am, unless they are unwell.

### **Around School**

Students will study in year group bubbles therefore it is important they stay in the year group zones during breaks. When moving around the school to go to a toilet/ classroom/ activity they will need to pass students from other year groups. Masks should be worn at these times and between students from other year groups, the 2 metre distance rule should be observed.

The 2 metre distance rule should be observed when talking to teachers, as teachers work with all year groups.

We require students not to leave litter for others to pick up, but to use the bins provided. Some areas may be out of bounds to students; students will be informed of these.

### **Toilets and Hand-Washing**

Year groups will be told their designated toilets by their tutors. Toilet blocks will be shared by Key Stages. There will be strict rules on the numbers of students in a toilet block and the queuing system will be socially-distanced. Likewise, social distancing should be observed at washing stations.

**Behaviour:** [The sanctions ladder](#) has been amended to recognise the importance of adhering to safety measures to protect others. All students will be talked through this at the start of term. (See home/ school agreement below)

### **Pastoral and Medical Support**

The form tutor, the learning mentors, student support officers and heads of year and key stage are available to help and support students. If they are worried about anything they can discuss it with their tutor or visit their key stage office; they will be shown where to go for this on the first day of term. They can also email their learning mentor/ student support officer who can set a planned appointment.

Matron or one of her deputy first aiders is always based in the medical room. Students will be shown where to wait safely if they need to see matron.

There will be temperature spot checks at breaks and in tutor time.

Any medical concerns/ queries relating to COVID 19 should be directed to Matron, Nicky Day 01628 816545 [nday@swbgs.com](mailto:nday@swbgs.com)/ [matron@swbgs.com](mailto:matron@swbgs.com)

### **Travel to and from school**

Where possible students should walk or cycle to school, or be dropped off by car. If students of different year groups (unless in the same household) are travelling together by car, they should wear their masks. **Please drop off your children in one of the nearby car parks, not on the road outside school.**

If students have to come on public transport we ask that they keep their bags on their laps; sit with students from their own year group where possible; they will be required to wear a mask.

### **Extra Curricular**

We hope to be able to offer a range of activities for students but some of these will be limited by regulations and timings. We will set out for students and parents what we are able to offer in sports, arts, academic societies and other activities and the specific rules that would apply to each of them at the start of term. There will be separate rules and risk assessments associated with all wider school activities posted on the website. Students with peripatetic music lessons will be sent separate risk assessments and protocols.

### **Visiting the School Site**

The school will have minimal visitors coming on to the school site and where visitors or parents are invited in, social distancing would need to be observed and masks worn.

We intend to run Parents' Evenings, Open Evenings and Information Evenings virtually through Borlase@Home for the Autumn Term and will review in response to the state of the virus.

### **Additional note for Sixth Formers**

Sixth formers are required to remain on site for breaks in the current circumstances so will need to buy food and drink on site or bring packed lunches. This will be reviewed as the situation changes. As usual, Year 13 may study at home from the start of the second break if they do not have a lesson in the afternoon. Otherwise students have silent supervised study/ collaborative work spaces on the school site. Sixth form may remain on site to study in the library until 5.00 p.m. Monday - Thursday if they wish.

### **Student Leadership**

Form prefects visiting tutor groups will do this by remaining a minimum of 2m from the class at the front of the classroom as with teachers. Other student support should be done via virtual meeting.

Prefect duties should be undertaken observing complete social distancing and wearing a mask.

Academic societies will need to be in separate year groups linked virtually.

Student leaders of younger groups will be given clear protocols which would need to be shared and agreed with parents before participating; this would include complete social distancing as with teachers.

## **Response Procedures**

If a student has symptoms of COVID 19 they should **not** come into school. If a student is generally feeling unwell they should **not** come into school and monitor their symptoms. If a student is feeling unwell while at school, they should report to Matron.

If a student is not attending school for a medical reason Matron (KS3/4) should be contacted or the Student Support (KS5). If this issue is COVID 19, parents of all year groups must contact Matron [matron@swbgs.com](mailto:matron@swbgs.com)/ 01628 816545

If your child is unwell at school, or is identified as having an abnormally high temperature, you will be contacted to collect your child as soon as possible or give permission for an older child to travel home directly if not using public transport.

[This infographic](#) illustrates how the school will respond if a student or staff member has symptoms or is tested positive/negative for COVID 19. Please read these carefully as the procedures *must* be followed to protect the safety of everyone. All parents and students are asked to sign to agree they will fully cooperate with this response process including engaging with Track and Trace. The school's procedure is informed by Public Health England and Buckinghamshire LEA: [PHE infographic](#)

### **Parent and Student requirements**

Students and parents need to have read and agreed to follow the COVID protocols. Please see below the home/school agreement that will need to be returned to school for the start of term:

#### **Home/school agreement**

Attending school in a COVID environment. (Autumn Term 2020)

It is very important that students and parents have read all the information above and read these rules as they are designed to protect the safety of students, the safety of staff and the safety of everyone's wider families by reducing any risk of spreading the virus.

Please read and sign to acknowledge you understand and agree to follow the school's procedures to manage the school in a COVID environment.

In summary:

- A student should **not** attend school if they feel at all unwell; they should stay home and monitor their symptoms.
- A student must **not** attend school if they have any of the COVID 19 symptoms - (a higher than normal temperature, a new cough, loss of taste/smell) See the infographic.
- All students and parents must follow the procedures set out in the Response Procedures Infographic including sharing the results of COVID tests with the school via Matron.
- All students must follow the school procedures on personal hygiene, social distancing, mask-wearing, use of transport and respecting others' personal space.
- Students must observe the protocols set out above and any related details shared by their tutors and teachers. There will be staff supporting them and guiding them but they must also take responsibility for adhering to the rules.
- All other school rules on positive behaviour apply as usual.

- Any deliberate flouting of these rules will be followed up by the Senior Leadership Team, parents being informed as it is vital we all work together as a school community to support a successful return to school.

Despite the school taking measures to make the environment as safe as possible, there is still, as there is anywhere, risk. Students therefore need to **BE ALERT** and take their own personal measures to support hygiene.

**Now that you have read this guidance, students and a parent/ carer need to [complete this form](#) to indicate your understanding and acceptance of the school's COVID-19 protocols.**

Thank you so much everyone for your consideration and care in reading this and supporting your child and the school in trying to create and sustain a safe learning environment that is able to remain open. We will be reassuring all our students and helping them feel comfortable at school. Our aim is for the whole school to stay alert and careful while also relaxing and enjoying being back in school. We will review and but if you have any questions, please contact [parents@swbgs.com](mailto:parents@swbgs.com), entitled COVID.

Best wishes,

Kay Mountfield  
Headteacher