

27082020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope that this letter finds you all well and that you have managed to have a break of some sort over the summer. We are all turning our minds to the start of term so I just wanted to update you with the latest information, much has not changed since I last wrote to you in September but I thought you might find it helpful to hear our arrangements again. If anything has changed, I have changed the colour to red – this will be because when we have reviewed the latest guidance, we have had to make some alterations to our planning.

In the Coronavirus section of the website, there is a helpful guide for parents from Staffordshire Psychology Service that you might want to read. The following is a summary:-

- ✓ Speak about the return to school in a positive and excited tone (do not let your child pick up on your understandable concerns)
- ✓ In these last few days of August, early to bed, early to rise – new sleep patterns need to be established
- ✓ Try on school uniform and pack school bag
- ✓ Share timetable and discuss class name, who staff will be in your child's group etc
- ✓ Watch and re-watch the video on the school website to remind your child of the new routines
- ✓ Practise wearing a face mask(if on public transport and you feel that your child is able to wear one) and putting it away in zipped bag
- ✓ Practise washing hands thoroughly (sing to Twinkle, Twinkle, little star)

### **My child's mental health and preparation for being back in school**

We are opening school to just our **new starter students on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September and for the rest of the school on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> September**. This is because they have not had the traditional transition visits that they would ordinarily have.

The Government are very keen that all students make a full return to school at the beginning of term. Because we are prioritising care and compassion, we know that, for some of our students, this will be a struggle. Please do get in touch if you feel that your child will find the reality of returning to school, even with you following the advice above, very stressful. Please ring school on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> September after 11am if you feel that, despite all of your preparation, you are not going to be able to get your child into school.

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## Bubbles?

We will have 3 bubbles operating, staff will move, in a limited way, between the bubbles but students will stay within their bubble in school. Students will not be transported into school in their bubbles. All families in receipt of LA transport should have had arrangements confirmed with them.

Immersive Bubble – Dudson and O’Cliff will stay primarily in their own classrooms – for majority of lessons (exceptions – Sports Hall & 4D room) and lunch – students will enter via the playground.

Exploratory Bubble - Spode, Wedgwood, Moorcroft and Middleport will stay primarily in their own classrooms – for majority of lessons (exceptions – Sports Hall, art room & 4D room), they can be together in their bubble for break-time on the bottom yard and lunch in the canteen. **They will enter into school through their own entrance.**

Questioning Bubble - **Bridgewater (for organisational / R/A purposes moving into Questioning)**, Royal Doulton, Portmeirion and Gladstone will be located down the other end of school so that they do not come into contact with Exploratory or Immersive students. They will stay primarily in their own classrooms – for majority of lessons (exceptions – Sports Hall & 4D room), they can be together in their bubble for break-time on the top yard and lunch in the canteen.

All teachers and other staff can operate across the different pathways but this will be kept to a minimum, only for teaching lessons. Staff will try to keep their distance from pupils and other staff as much as they can, ideally 2 metres from other adults. However, we recognise, as I am sure you do, that this will be a challenge in our small school with our complex students. Staff will try to avoid close face to face contact and they will try to minimise time spent within 1 metre of anyone. **Staff in the different pathways have separate staffrooms as well to minimise prolonged contact with staff in other bubbles.**

## Attendance and student illness?

The Government have stated that all students should be returning to school, we will therefore, as directed, be tracking attendance closely. However, please ensure that if your child is symptomatic, they should remain at home and you should source a test

- a high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you’ve noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

If students show symptoms at school, they will be isolated with a member of staff (In PPE) to look after them, and you will be asked to immediately pick them up.

## Transport?

Where possible, your child should wear a mask on school transport. There will be 3 separate areas in school for disembarkation. When taxis arrive at school, the PC Team will greet students. They will then be escorted to their TA team who will supervise walk students to their classrooms where they will take off masks and wash / sanitise hands.

At the end of the day, students will be supervised putting on their masks and staff will check that the vehicle is clean. It is the responsibility of the transport team to sanitise hands before their journey home.

## Will all staff be wearing a mask in social areas in school?

Yes, on corridors and when moving outside their bubble. Masks will not be worn in the classroom. If your child has worn a mask when out and about with you, for example, when shopping, and you want them to wear their mask in social areas in school, please email us (Admin - Blackfriars Academy [admin@blackfriars.shaw-education.org.uk](mailto:admin@blackfriars.shaw-education.org.uk)) before Tuesday so that we can ensure we plan accordingly. We will keep this constantly under review.

## Personal Care and Enteral Feeding?

We have extended the hours of the Personal Care team to support with arrangements for toileting – the PC Team will wear personal protective equipment including masks and visors, as will Linda, our Enteral Feeding Assistant.

## What will my child wear?

School Uniform should again be worn – please ensure that you visit our school website to get the direct link to 'My Clothing' to order uniform.

## PE & House colours?

In the first term, we will not be changing for PE lessons and therefore you do not need to worry at this stage about House Colours

## Lunches?

The canteen will be open and **Naomi**, our new chef will be cooking a daily hot meal. If your child has a packed lunch, it needs to be brought into school in plastic bags that will get thrown away at the end of the lunch sitting. There are 2 lunch sittings in the hall – **11.45am** noon for the Exploratory Pathway and 12.30 for the Questioning Pathway. The 2 bubbles will not meet in the hall. The Immersive Pathway will have their lunch in their classrooms. The timings are all approximate – we know that we will have to thoroughly clean surfaces after the first setting – if we need more time to do this, we will have to allow for that.

## Break-times?

Break time is at 10.15am – 10.30am – bubbles will have separate areas to play out and will not have the opportunity to meet either outside or on the corridors

## What happens if there is a local outbreak and my child can't come to school?

We will provide on-line learning for your child

## Items brought into school?

Please keep these to a minimum – students all have their own school equipment assigned to them in school that is kept separate to everyone else's. Your child's reading book, water bottle and diary are the only things that need transporting between home and school. Lunch needs to be in plastic bags that get thrown away at the end of the sitting. **Please provide a zipped bag for your child's face mask if they wear one.**

## Parents & carers coming into school?

We will unfortunately have to keep this to a minimum in the autumn term, but please do ring us if you ever want to discuss **any** aspect of school life

## Pool?

We have managed to secure funding for a refurbishment of the pool and plant equipment. The pool will therefore be closed for the majority of the first term. All students will have extra PE lessons. If your child has provision specifically in their EHCP for aqua or hydrotherapy, we will substitute a pool session with an additional physical management session

## Physio and Speech and Language?

We have been informed that external speech and language and physio sessions will be resumed in September.

## Start dates and finish times?

**Term starts for year 7s and new starters only on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September**

**Other years will start on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> September**

The school day will remain the same as it is now (8.45am – 3.25pm) apart from one very important exception. On **Mondays only, the school day will finish at 2pm for all students.** This is the compromise that we have come to in light of the Parent Consultation that took place in the New Year. Parents all understood that we needed more time as staff to meet and share planning, student information, update training etc etc but several parents said that the impact on their own working arrangements would be too great if we finished early every day which was our original intention. An alternative that was suggested was to have an early finish on just one day. This has been agreed by our CEO, Jo Morgan and transport have been informed. We have claimed the time from our long registration slot and lunch-times (see below re. enrichment) On Mondays only:

- Assembly would ordinarily take place between 1-2pm (**this time will be used for Reflection and reading whilst we are not in a position to have large gatherings**)
- Dismissal from the hall starting at 2pm when taxis will arrive
- Dismissal usually takes 20 – 25 minutes

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- All students who are picked up by parents need to be collected by 2.15pm

I hope that this provides all of the information that you require. Should you have any further concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me,

Kind regards,



Principal