



Dear Parent/Carer,

August 2020

Returning to School

We are looking forward to welcoming our students back in the coming weeks. Year 7 and 11 students will return to school on Friday 4th September, with all other students returning to school on Monday 7th September. I wanted to write to you to inform you of the detailed planning we have undertaken during the summer holiday to ensure that your child returns to a safe and healthy learning environment. I would really appreciate your support in explaining the contents of this letter to your child and helping them to understand the absolute importance of following each aspect of our plans to keep all students and staff safe.

Bubbles

Students will spend their days in school in year group 'bubbles'. This will ensure that we limit the contact students have with other students in different year groups. It is important that students adhere to these bubbles and only spend time with others in their year group whilst in school.

Aspire Groups

To make sure that we maintain year group 'bubbles', we have changed our tutor system for the foreseeable future. Students will move to a temporary tutor group which will be with students of the same year group. These tutor groups will be called 'Aspire Groups' and students will need a reading book each day of the week for their Aspire session, which will take place between 1.40pm and 2pm. It may be that your child has a new Aspire Lead in September however, all staff are ready to support their new students and communicate with parents.

Entry to School

Each year group will have a designated entrance into school and should arrive no earlier than 8.20am and no later than 8.40. It is very important that all students are on time to avoid placing others at risk. The different entrances will help students to move from their entrance to their designated outdoor space with the minimum of walking. Once in their outdoor space, students should line up in their tutor groups (now called Aspire Groups) in alphabetical order. At 8.45am, each group will walk into school to their first lesson. All mobile phones should be handed in when lining up and these can then be collected from individual envelopes at Reception at the end of the school day.

Year 7: Will enter school through the main entrance near the 'turning circle' and gather by the tree at the front of school.

Year 8: Will enter school via the leisure centre entrance and walk to the basketball court to gather as a year group.

Year 9: Will enter the west block car park through the pedestrian gate and gather in the car park where no cars will be parked.

Year 10: Will enter via the leisure centre entrance and walk to the tennis court to gather as a year group.

Year 11: Will enter school via the main entrance near the 'turning circle' and gather by the canteen.

Movement Around Site

When moving to a lesson, students should wear a face mask. This is because they may be walking near to students in other year groups. We will provide all students with a mask that will last for 3 weeks. At the end of the 3 weeks, we will replace the mask for each student. All students will be provided with their mask when they enter school for the first time next term. It is important that students take responsibility for their own mask and bring it to school each day. Replacement masks can be bought from Student Reception for a small charge. It is important that students follow the one-way system in operation around the school site.

Lessons

Once students arrive at their lesson, they will be given hand sanitiser by the classroom teacher. Before the class arrive, the teacher will have cleaned the room using anti-bacterial spray on tables and chairs. Once students have sat down, they can take their mask off and begin the 'Do Now' task on the board. We have reviewed all subjects we offer at Whitstone School and considered the safest way to deliver each one. This will be reviewed over the coming weeks to ensure we are looking after the safety of all students and staff.

Equipment

To ensure that all students have the correct equipment at the start of the year, we will be issuing every student with a pencil case containing useful items of equipment. It is the responsibility of each student to look after this pencil case and equipment, bringing it to every lesson they attend. The pencil case contains a black pen, green pen, pencil, rubber, pencil sharpener, ruler and highlighter. We would ask that each child brings their own scissors, glue and protractor. This will all help to reduce the number of items of equipment which are handed out to students. Replacement items of equipment can be purchased from Student Reception.

Break and Lunchtimes

At break and lunchtime, students will move to their outdoor area which will be for their year group. These spaces will be the same areas that students lined up in at the start of the day. If the weather is poor, each year group will have an indoor space.

At break time, our canteen will not be open and we would ask students to bring in a snack and a drink if they would like to for break time. At lunchtime, those students who would like to have food from the canteen, will be asked to line up outside the canteen in their year group line. They will then enter the canteen and purchase their food which will be served in a takeaway container. Students should then move to their indoor or outdoor space to eat their food with the rest of their year group.

Visitors

We would ask that all parents and visitors to school phone ahead to book in a meeting. Where possible, meetings will be held remotely. No visitor should arrive at school without a pre-arranged appointment as this will risk impacting on the different bubbles around school.

Behaviour for Learning

It is of crucial importance that all students work with staff to help keep everyone safe. Staff are prepared to help students understand the new procedures and are very aware of the impact of the recent lockdown and absence from 'normal' school. Instances of poor behaviour may result in not only disruption to learning and an increase in anxiety for other students, but also in a risk to the safety of staff and peers. I really appreciate your support in talking to your child about the importance of excellent behaviour for learning in school as soon as they arrive in September.

Uniform

We have been really pleased to see the impact that our uniform support has had on the families in the local area. Many parents have purchased uniform through school and it is pleasing to know that this offer has been widely used by parents. We are looking forward to welcoming all of our students back to school in the correct uniform.

Emotional Support

We appreciate that for many students, the return to school will be an anxious one. We have spent a considerable amount of time as a staff group planning for this moment, have looked forward to seeing our students and are ready to support any individuals who may need additional help. We will keep an eye on all our young people however, if you have any particular concerns about your child, please contact your child's House Leader who will be able to help.

We will be posting a video on our Facebook page providing further information about our site and how we have made it safe for our students to return. It would be really useful for students to watch this video before returning to school.

We are really looking forward to seeing every one of our students when they return. We will do everything we can to support this transition back into school, will be ready to communicate with any parent who has particular concerns or worries and will continue to adapt as the local and national picture develops.

If you have any questions or queries, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours faithfully,



Mr Guy Swallow
Headteacher