

RP/tb – 26 August 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

**Re: Information on the Return of all Students from September 2020**

Following the publication of the statement from the UK’s Chief Medical Officers on Sunday, it is clear the risk posed from Coronavirus is low enough that all Schools across the country will be open to students from September. As I stated in my last communication, this does not mean that coronavirus has gone away and consequently our normal working timetable will be different for the foreseeable future. This includes changes to the school day and additional hygiene measures for all on site. I hope you find the following information useful in preparing for September.

**The Start of Term**

To ensure both staff and students are prepared for the start of the new academic year, I have had to make some changes to arrangements for the start of term. This will allow both staff and students to be trained in our new routines, which will ensure we are able to operate safely. Students will return on the following dates.

Date	Students in School
Wednesday 2nd September	INSET (no students in school)
Thursday 3rd September	INSET (no students in school)
Friday 4th September	Year 7 only
Monday 7th September	Year 7 only
Tuesday 8th September	All Year Groups

Please note, with the exception of Year 7, all other year groups will return to school on Tuesday 8th September. All students must arrive in line with their new staggered start times, see details below. This means Year 7 will need to be in school at 8.50 am on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> September. On arrival Year 7 students will be greeted by staff and directed where to go to meet their form tutor. Students will just need to remember their tutor group code, previously communicated. Parents of students in Years 8 to 13 will receive a separate letter detailing arrangements for their first day in school, a large part of which will involve a detailed introduction to our new systems and routines to ensure the safety of all.

**The New School Day**

To facilitate social distancing and the protection of year group bubbles, students in different year groups will start and end their studies each day at different times.

Year Group	Start Time	End Time
7	8.50 am	2.40 pm
8	8.20 am	2.10 pm
9	9.20 am	3.10 pm
10	9.50 am	3.40 pm
11	10.20 am	4.10 pm
Y12 and 13*	8.20 am	4.10 pm

\* Please note, sixth form students are not in lessons during all periods. Students will be expected to arrive for their first lesson of the day.

Whilst the school day is now shorter than it was previously, students will still receive the same number of teaching hours. The shorter day comes from a reduction in time allocated to break, lunch and morning registration.

The school gates will be opened 10 minutes prior to the start time for each year group. It is essential students arrive promptly and no earlier than 10 minutes before their start time so that we can ensure they can move safely to their area of the school for that day. Any student arriving late will need to report to Student Services. All gates will be open for all year groups, including the bridge gate.

### **Break and Lunch**

Students in each year group will access the dining hall at break and lunch at different times to protect year group bubbles. We will continue to operate a cashless system and request that parents top up meal accounts online via School Gateway. Students will not be able to make cash deposits in school. Please contact the main office if you do not have access to school gateway. Whilst the menu offered will be more limited than previously, students will still be offered both hot and cold meal options each day.

Students may bring a packed lunch, but must ensure all waste is placed in the bins provided or taken home with them. Students must bring a water bottle and the water fountains will be available for students to refill them. Students will not be permitted to drink directly from water fountains.

### **Transport and Arrival to School**

Arrangements have already been communicated to those students who normally access the Shardlow/Ambaston bus. Wherever possible, I would request students walk or cycle to school and avoid being dropped off in cars. I would like to remind you that parents are not permitted to enter the school site for drop-off or pick up. Students will be greeted at the gates by a member of staff and given hand sanitiser. Staff will also be on hand to support our new Year 7 cohort and direct them to their rooms for the day. The new timings of the school day must be strictly adhered to by all students to ensure we are able to protect year group bubbles throughout the day.

### **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

Following a change to the government guidance on the use of face coverings and PPE in schools last night, I am currently reviewing our guidance on its use. I will send a further update in the next few days on this matter.

### **Equipment**

The Government guidance is clear, students should bring the minimum equipment required for the day. Students will be permitted to bring bags and should ensure they have the equipment required for the day, to include a pen, pencil, ruler and calculator. There should be no sharing of equipment between students.

### **Uniform**

Students will be expected to be in full uniform from September to include a blazer, tie and formal school shoes. On days where students have PE on their timetable, they must come into school in their full PE kit (there will be no changing facilities available). These days are the only time students are permitted to wear trainers in school. No student will have PE on their first day at which time they will receive their timetables to allow them to plan for this.

### **Extra-curricular Provision**

Due to the staggered school day and related coronavirus guidance, there will be no extra-curricular activities including trips for the first few weeks. We fully recognise the value of these activities and will review the situation regularly to see whether we can begin to build these in to our working.

## Attendance

The Government have made it clear that students attendance to school is now mandatory. We are mindful of the damage caused by students missing out on their education during the period of school closure and very much look forward to working closely with them again. I recognise that for some, the return to school will be the cause of a great deal of anxiety, particularly for those with pre-existing medical conditions that may put them at higher risk from the coronavirus. If you feel you are unable to allow your child to return to school at this time, please contact the school office to discuss this further.

## Bubbles and the Organisation of Students

We have organised the school day so that students remain in year group bubbles of approximately 180 students. On most days students will remain in specific areas of the school related to the subjects they are being taught that day. For students in Years 7, 8 and 9, they will receive a day of English, Maths and Science, with two additional days in which all other subjects will be incorporated. For those in Years 10 and 11, they will also receive a day each week of English, Maths and Science, with two days set aside for the teaching of their 3 options subjects. We have set up classrooms to maintain as much space as possible between desks. However, students will sit two to a desk in the majority of classrooms. The DfE guidance is clear that this is permitted, so long as students are facing forwards and not directly facing each other. We have reviewed all of our teaching spaces carefully and adapted them accordingly. Where students are sitting facing each other, such as in ICT rooms, we have put screening in place to mitigate this risk.

## Health and Hygiene

I cannot stress enough the importance of personal hygiene in ensuring we are able to keep the school site safe for students and staff. Prior to leaving home, students should wash their hands and do this again on their arrival to school. Students will be provided with hand sanitiser as they enter the school each day. It will also be available in every classroom and in key areas around the site such as in the dining hall and at key entry points to the building. I would encourage all students to carry their own hand sanitiser so that they can use this as frequently as they wish. We are increasing the frequency of cleaning in toilets and all communal areas, including the dining hall, which will be cleaned between year groups.

## COVID-19 Symptoms and Test and Trace

It is essential that any member of the school community exhibiting any symptom of coronavirus takes the appropriate measures. You must also inform the Headteacher via the school office. These symptoms include:

- 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 have noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal.

Students should not come into school for a period of 10 days if they have coronavirus symptoms or have tested positive in the last 10 days. If a student begins to show symptoms whilst in school, they will be removed from their lesson and supervised and a parent called to come and collect them. They will then need to self-isolate for a period of 10 days and arrange to have a COVID 19 test. The test should be booked immediately by calling 119 or visiting <https://self-referral.test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/antigen/name>. If the test comes back positive, please inform the school, as well as NHS Test and Trace, and provide details of any close contacts of your child. If a student tests positive, they will be required to stay at home for a period of at least 10 days from the onset of their symptoms. Further guidance can be found at - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>. Even after the 10 days, students may not return if they still have a fever. However, they may return if their cough or

loss of taste or smell remains as these symptoms have been shown to continue for some time, even when the infection has passed. If a member of the same household tests positive, all other household members must self-isolate for a period of 14 days, regardless of whether they show symptoms.

If a student has symptoms but has had a coronavirus test that has come back negative, they should remain off school until their symptoms improve. It is highly likely there will be a variety of common cold and flu viruses in circulation as we move through the Autumn term, which may still be passed on within the school community.

### **Local Lockdowns and Partial Closure**

Whilst we all hope that a local lockdown or school closure will not be required, we are planning for this eventuality so that we have a remote curriculum in place for all year groups. Teaching staff are currently updating all of our schemes of work so that we are able to provide remote learning opportunities for any student who is absent from school. We have invested significantly in a number of online learning platforms to ensure our staff and students are prepared and know where and how to access their work if lockdown occurs again.

Whilst the majority of this letter has focused on students, our staff are very much in the same situation with regard to their risk of catching COVID 19. By the nature of our roles, we will come in to contact with large numbers of students every day, with most staff teaching across a number of year groups. Staff, like students, will need to self-isolate should they show symptoms. Of course, in this situation, we will arrange cover and use supply agencies, but if we were to see a large number of staff needing to self-isolate, it may be that on a given day we do not have enough staff in school to cover all classes and to open the school safely. In this instance, I would have no choice but to close the school to an individual year group. Please be assured, this would be very much the last resort as I recognise the challenge such a decision poses in arranging last minute childcare, but it may be a scenario we find ourselves in.

I hope you find the information in this letter useful in preparing your child for their return. You will find included with this letter a list of frequently asked questions you may wish to go through with them prior to their return.

The full DfE guidance on students returning to school in September can be found here -

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

I know I speak for the whole staff at The Long Eaton School when I express how much we are looking forward to welcoming of all of our students. Further information on arrangements for students first day in school will be communicated shortly. Our full COVID-19 risk assessment will be made available via our website from Tuesday 1st September.

Should you have any specific questions not addressed in this information, please do not hesitate to contact the school office. I very much look forward to working with you as we move through the Autumn term.

Yours faithfully  
The Long Eaton School

*R Peel*

Mr R Peel  
Headteacher