Dear Parents

Following the challenges of the past few months we are looking forward to welcoming all our students back in September and meeting our new Year 7 students.

I am very proud about how the Bishop community has responded to this. Relationships between home and school have been strengthened through the frequent contact, on-line learning, live lessons and student visits to the Bishop. Teachers, support staff, parents and especially students should all be proud of all they have achieved during this time.

Now we return to ‘business as usual’ as we embark on the ‘new normal.’ As ever, in all that we do, we will be adhering to our shared mantra of ‘High Expectations and No Excuses.’

**What will September look like?**

The ‘new normal’ will be characterised by many changes for our students. These will enable us to provide quality education while keeping your child as safe as possible. The ‘new normal’ will be characterised by extensive hygiene arrangements, frequent hand washing and use of sanitiser; appropriate social distancing with teaching and socialising in year group ‘bubbles’.

The government has announced that a fulltime return for all students is both the expectation and legal requirement for young people. The flexibilities given to parents in the last three months regarding attendance will be withdrawn and so you should be preparing your child for their full return to school in September. You will also need to think very carefully about travel restrictions and the booking of holidays to countries from which UK citizens are required to quarantine when returning. The government does not give schools flexibility to authorise these holidays if a child ends up missing school in September as a result of quarantine.

 The government guidance sets out the two overarching principles that schools should use when ensuring that the risk of transmission of Covid-19 is minimised in planning for a full return in September. The first being how schools can maintain minimal contact between groups of students and ensure these groups, “bubbles”, can be kept separate. The second being how schools can ensure distance is kept between individuals. Both of these requirements are central in our planning.

Since we have received the government guidance we have been spending time considering what approaches we can take that will enable our students to return as safely as possible. These considerations have included start and finish times, a range of entrance and exits, zoning of the school, rearranging the layout of classrooms, minimising student movement around the school site, lunch provision and much more. Please find attached the ‘Ways we are keeping each other safe and operational procedures’ for students. We urge you to read this document carefully with your child to ensure we are keeping each other as safe as possible in our school community.

We will also be taking additional steps to ensure that students’ mental health and well-being are addressed as they return to the ‘new normal’. If you do have concerns about your child’s mental health please contact their Mentor or Head of Year.

**Key Information**

1. Students must bring their own equipment for learning. There can be no sharing of equipment.
2. All students must wear full school uniform.
3. Students must bring their own packed lunch, snack and drink. Packed lunches will be provided for those students entitled to a Free School Meal - this must be ordered in advance. Our Finance Team will be emailing over the summer holiday period with information on how to place your order.
4. Students will use hand sanitiser provided in each classroom each time they enter. There will be numerous hand sanitiser stations throughout the school site.
5. Students should also have their own hand sanitiser and tissues.
6. Students will, as far as is practicably possible, remain in their year group bubble. This will include teaching and socialising time. Year bubbles will have dedicated reception zones, learning zones and social zones.
7. Students must only use the toilets in their learning zone.
8. Students should expect to see additional cleaning staff regularly cleaning the school throughout the day.
9. The Behaviour Policy and Alternative Learning Centre will operate as normal. Behaviour that puts other students at risk will not be tolerated.
10. It is imperative that we have up to date correct contact details for parents and carers. To ensure we are able to update you with information and also in relation to ‘Test and Trace’ requirements.

**September Return**

As you will be aware our new Year 7 students were denied the opportunity to have the usual transition day in July. To compensate for this we will welcome our new Year 7 students on Monday 7th September.

**Monday 7th September – Year 7 Only**

8.25- Year 7 enter via the main pedestrian entrance and proceed to main hall for welcome assembly.

**On Tuesday 8th September** we will welcome all our students back.

8.25 - Year 7 enter via main pedestrian entrance and proceed to the reception zone

9.00 – 6th Form enter via main school driveway and proceed to their Tutor Rooms

All other year groups should arrive as scheduled below and should enter via the main pedestrian entrance and proceed to main hall for welcome assembly:

8.25 – Year 11

9.00 - Year 8

9.30 – Year 9

10.00 – Year 10

It is imperative that students arrive at the correct time to ensure that we are able to maintain the integrity of the year group bubbles.

The government guidance is that students should walk or cycle to school where possible. This will ease congestion in Mallard Road and allow a safer start for our students. Students who cycle to school should use the bike sheds as normal whilst maintaining sensible social distancing.

**Recovery Programme**

*Year 10 & 11*

All students in Years 10 and 11 will have additional lessons each day to help support their ’catch-up’ of lost time in school. It is compulsory that all Year 10 and 11 students finish their lessons at 4.00pm Monday- Thursday and 3.00pm on Friday. This arrangement will remain in place for the full academic year. This will allow for additional teaching in English, maths, science, humanities and option subjects.

*Year 7- 9*

Details of the Recovery Programme for Year 7-9 will be shared in September.

We look forward to seeing all our students in September.

Thank you for your continued support and prayers.

Best wishes

Paul Mc