



July 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

September 2020 Return to School Arrangements

We have now reached the end of the school year and I am writing to inform you that we have completed planning for full reopening in September. The site is being prepared for the start of the new academic year and we very much look forward to welcoming all our students back. I would like to reassure parents that we will be following the most up-to-date government guidance to make Marshland High School a safe learning environment. Within this letter I have outlined all of the operational procedures and important information that parents, carers and students need to know about returning for the new term. Please read this document thoroughly and talk to your child about the procedures for reopening.

Attendance at school

Attendance will be mandatory for all students at the start of the new academic year, meaning all students in all years must be in school. The exception to this, is if a child is too unwell to attend school or a leave of absence has been authorised by the Headteacher.

If you suspect that your child will be absent due to COVID-19 you must immediately get your child tested and let us know the test outcome. If the test is positive your child should self-isolate for 7 days and other members of the family must self-isolate for 14 days.

Further guidance can be found at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection

If a student has symptoms of COVID-19 in school, they will be held in a dedicated area set aside for those presenting with symptoms. A member of staff will support until the parent/carer collects and takes the child for testing. We request that you respond immediately to requests for children to be collected.

For children who were shielding or living with vulnerable family members, this is no longer applicable from 1st August 2020 and students are expected to attend school. **The only exception is if your child has been advised by a clinician to shield and you must supply evidence of this advice in order for us to authorise absence.**

I will update you at the start of the new term regarding Norfolk County Council's sanctions for non-attendance at school.

I am acutely aware that this may be a frightening time for some of our students, and some may be apprehensive about returning to school. Our Pastoral team will be available to support and reassure all our students.

Travelling to school

Where possible students should bike or walk to school. The school car park will only be accessible to members of staff and school buses and we anticipate traffic difficulties as a result of restrictions.

Where parents are dropping off / collecting students we request that this is done away from the main site, preferably towards the bottom or top of School Road. Students can then walk the remainder of their journey to school or back to their collection point and will help to ease congestion. For those students being dropped off by bus the only access into school will be via the main gate next to Maths. All other students must use the pedestrian gate.

Sanitiser stations will be available at these points at the start and end of the day for students to use before entering and leaving site.

For our Year 7 starters only on 7th September, you may wish to accompany your child to the gate, but we ask that you respect and maintain sensible social distancing rules.

Please be aware that **no visitors are allowed on to the school site**. Please do not ask to see a member of staff when dropping off or picking up your child. If you wish to speak with a member of staff we ask you to email or telephone the school reception. They will then arrange a telephone or virtual meeting on your behalf. It will not be possible to drop off forgotten items to reception during the day either.

For students who travel by public transport they will be required to wear a face covering in line with the current government guidance. The mask will need to be removed before entering the site and placed in a separate plastic bag and stored within the child's bag until needed at the end of the day and only once they have left site. There is no requirement to wear a face covering on dedicated school transport. However, if a child chooses to wear a covering it must also be removed before entering school.

All students travelling on dedicated school transport are required to sit with other students from their year group. Drivers will be briefed on this, but it is our expectation that our students follow the guidance so there is no requirement for the driver to intervene. We recommend that students sanitise their hands prior to boarding their bus. I have been informed by Norfolk County Council that the buses follow a routine sanitisation between trips.

Timings of the school day

Timings of the school day remain the same - we start school at 8:45am and finish at 3:15pm.

There are, however, some changes to when students can be on site. **Students will not be allowed on the school site before 8:30am**. This will allow us to prepare for opening, and to supervise students and keep them safe as they arrive on site. When students arrive they must go immediately to their tutor base without stopping or socialising on the way. This will limit the amount of interaction between year groups and protect children from possible transmission of COVID-19. Duty staff will supervise this at the start of the day. Norfolk County Council Transport have assured me that buses will not arrive on site until 8:30am. Tutor group information will be emailed to you before the start of term.

At the end of the school day students will be dismissed and are expected to make their way immediately off site or onto their bus. After-school activities will be temporarily suspended, however after-school detentions will continue in line with our Behaviour Policy.

Operational changes during the day

We have structured our school day following current government guidance. We will, where reasonably possible, be containing students in year group bubbles to limit contact outside year groups. This does mean some operational aspects of the day will have to change. As and when government guidance changes we should be able to revert to our normal way of operating, so we hope that these measures are only temporary.

Please be aware that current government guidance states that face coverings are not to be worn in school. Any child who brings in a face covering will be asked to place it in a plastic bag and keep it in their school bag prior to entering site.

During lessons

During lessons and tutor time, students will not be able to share equipment with each other, nor borrow equipment from school. It is vital that students have all their own equipment required for the school day. 'Ready to learn' checks will take place during tutor time and sanctions issued for students who do not have the correct equipment. School has strict guidelines where school equipment may be used, for example in music, art, technology, computer science, PE and science. Risk assessments are in place and rigorous cleaning regimes will be carried out.

In addition students are expected to keep all of their own exercise books/folders required for each lesson with them. Bearing this in mind, it would be wise to make sure your child has a suitable bag to carry books and equipment into and around school all day.

In each classroom a "teacher zone" has been marked out and students will not be allowed to enter this zone in order to maintain distance between them and the teacher. All students are expected to remain in their seats and at their desks unless instructed to move by a member of staff. Where possible PE will take place outside.

Between lessons and when walking around the building

There will be a one-way system operating in school, which is marked on corridors and floors, and will limit the amount of face-to-face contact during lesson changeovers. Between lesson students are expected to walk with purpose to arrive at their next lesson promptly. Students will be required to move between lessons, in and outside the school building, in silence. This will allow students to hear staff instructions to ensure everyone's health and safety, and reduce the risk of cross-contamination from students shouting and talking. It will also stop students from being tempted to stop and socialise with other students.

Students must not make physical contact with each other and where possible keep a sensible social distance.

At break and lunch

In order to minimise contact, staggered lunch and break times will be in place. This means that not all students are at break or lunch at the same time and there is less chance of contact with others from outside year group bubbles.

We will have restricted capacity to support students buying and consuming food from the school canteen due to protective measures being in place. As a consequence **we request**

you provide your child with a packed lunch instead of using the canteen. We will of course, provide food to children entitled to Free School Meals.

Due to protective measures we will not accept any cash from September and payments for all school activities are to be made using your ParentPay account. It is essential that you keep your child's account in sufficient credit. We will review canteen arrangements within the first few weeks and advise if we have capacity to support more students to buy food.

Each year group will be allocated a zone where they will be based at break or lunch. Whilst moving from lesson to breaks, students must remain in silence until they have reached their break zone. From this zone they will be instructed on when they can visit the canteen, packed lunch area and toilet facilities. It is very important that children sanitise their hands before and after eating any food, and using the toilets. Students must not share food or drink with any other student.

Returning to school

To allow us to reopen safely, there is a staggered start for each year group as follows:

Year 7 Monday 7th September 2020
Year 11 Tuesday 8th September 2020
Years 8, 9 and 10 Thursday 10th September 2020

I appreciate that there is a lot of information outlined in this letter, but it is very important to us that you are aware of the steps we are taking to minimise any risks due to COVID-19. We will be informing all students of the new rules during their first morning at school, but we hope that by you sharing this information with them, it will allow them to understand what is expected.

For students who fail to follow the new rules, we have a new Behaviour Policy Addendum which can be found on our website, and should be read in conjunction with this letter.

I am sure you fully understand that for public health reasons it is vital that all students follow our expectations and rules all the time without question. If a small minority of students chose not to follow these rules, there will be robust consequences. We absolutely insist on prioritising safety. I must add that if a student fails to follow these rules, despite several warnings, exclusion from school will be considered, including permanent exclusion.

I am also sure that you understand that these are unprecedented times for all of us. We will review and update how we operate as a school, as and when additional guidance is released.

I would like to thank all students and families for your anticipated support in order to allow the reopening and smooth running of the school. Finally, I would like to wish all our students and their families a safe and restful summer holiday and I look forward to seeing you all on our return in September.

Yours faithfully.

Mr T Duce

Deputy Headteacher