



Queen Mary's Grammar School

Headmaster: R J Langton, M A

21st August 2020

Full re-opening of the school from September 2020

Dear parent/guardian

Following my correspondence with you at the end of the summer term in July, I am writing with some detail about the start of the autumn term. As you will be aware, the government are committed to all students returning to school and have launched a '[Back to school safely](#)' campaign. We have designed our provision to meet these needs.

We have carried out extensive planning in school, but it will mean that the student experience will be different to before. In accordance with the [government's guidance](#) to schools, the essential measures include:

- a requirement that people who are ill stay at home (see p3/4 of this letter)
- robust hand and respiratory hygiene procedures by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach
- enhanced cleaning arrangements
- active engagement with NHS Test and Trace
- formal consideration of how to reduce contacts and maximise distancing between those in school wherever possible and minimise potential for contamination so far as is reasonably practicable

A copy of our [risk assessment](#) is available on the school website and this letter sets out some of the details around the school day and various routines. We will have enhanced onsite cleaning during the day in order to make sure shared areas are sanitised between use. There will be extensive signage and hand sanitiser stations around the school.

Dates for the start of term

Whilst the term dates for 2020-21 will remain the same, it has been decided across the MAT that the start of term in September will look slightly different to usual:

Mon 31 Aug	Bank holiday (School closed)
Tue 1 Sep	Staff training day 1 (no students onsite)
Wed 2 Sep	Staff training day 2 (no students onsite)
Thu 3 Sep	Induction for Years 7/12 (see separate guidance for these year groups)
Fri 4 Sep	Induction for Years 7/12 (see separate guidance for these year groups)
Mon 7 Sep	First day back for other students (students should report to their year group areas at the allotted start times (see p2))
Wed 9 Sep	First MAT lessons for sixth form

This is to allow more time for the induction of new students at the beginning of term (as we have lost face-to-face options from the summer term) and also gives more time for staff CPD and planning.

The live [calendar](#) and the updated [term dates](#) are available on the school's website.

Zonal approach and structure of the day

In order to comply with the DfE's regulations, we will operate a zonal model, with each group as a separate bubble. The students will, in the main, not be able to mix with students from other year groups. The regular teaching timetable will operate in the usual six periods of the day. However, there will be a staggered start and end to the day and it is important that you look carefully at the detail in the table below for the relevant year group arrangements. Students cannot arrive early and must go straight to their year group zone.

Each year group has been assigned a zone in the school, where their lessons and non-contact time will take place. They will receive the full range of curriculum subjects, but these won't necessarily be taught in specialist rooms. Teachers will move between the zones, but students will remain in the same part of the school for the day. Lunch will be staggered and carefully managed and there will be designated areas for non-contact time. A non-teaching member of the pastoral team will be assigned to each year group for support (listed below along with the head of year).

Year	Start/finish	Teaching area	Lunch/non-contact time	Entry/exits	Toilets (can be shared)	Pastoral support
7	09.00-15.55 Short form periods at beginning/end of day	Upper Moss Close Q1-3, M1-3	Usual lunchtime (canteen shift 1) Field zone 2	Main entrance	Moss Close	HOY: Mrs Youngman Assistant HOY: Mr Magee SJS/HJW/CC
8	08.45-15.40 Longer form period at the beginning of the day	Lower Moss Close Q4-6, M4-6	P4 (canteen shift 2) Field zone 2	Main entrance gate 1	Moss Close	HOY: Mr Diskin DCH
9	09.15-16.10 P1 as the beginning of the day Longer form period at the end of the day	Q7-11, IT2	Usual lunchtime (canteen shift 2) Field zone 3	Main entrance	Rear hall toilets	HOY: Miss Naguthney RD
10	08.45-15.40 Longer form period at the beginning of the day	H1-4, L1, L3, IT1	P4 (canteen shift 1) Field zone 3	Main entrance gate 2	Rear hall toilets	HOY: Mr Mackenzie MH
11	09.15-16.10 P1 as the beginning of the day Longer form period at the end of the day	DT Corridor (M7-9, DT1, DT2, Art, C1)	Usual lunchtime (canteen shift 3) Field zone TBC	CPA student entrance	DT External toilets (parade ground)	HOY: Mr Rendu TF
12	08.45-15.40 Longer form period at the beginning of the day	Science block (Ground & 1st floors) S1-11, 6LRF SH zone 1 for SPS	Usual lunchtime (Café 6, external service and offsite) Field zone 1, sixth form garden and seating in parade ground	CPA student entrance	Science Collier Centre	HOY: Mr Matley RMW/SJB
13	09.00-15.55 Short form periods at beginning/end of day	Science block (2nd floor) 6LRR, Bateman Room, MU1-2, Pavilion, Squash Court SH zone 2 for SPS	P4 (Café 6, external service and offsite) Field zone 1, sixth form garden and seating in parade ground	CPA student entrance	Science Collier centre	

More information will be provided to the different year groups by their Heads of Year when term starts and subject teachers will brief students on curriculum adaptations, including in practical subjects such as PE, science, music and DT. Classrooms will be organised with desks facing forward and a clearly marked area for teachers to teach from. Teachers will be able to move between the year group bubbles, but will adhere to strict social distancing and will carry antiseptic wipes and hand gels.

Curriculum expectations, online learning and catch up support

It is important that we ascertain early in the term what the learning needs of the students are after such a period of not being in school. Teachers will be assessing groups and academic support and curriculum modifications will be communicated accordingly, especially for those students returning to us to start Years 11 and 13. There will be changes to routines and we are looking to make more use of MS Teams in our everyday provision. The students (particularly those new to the school) need to develop their expertise on Teams in the event of a further lockdown or the need for blended learning delivery. The parental guidance video on MS Teams is available [here](#).

Safeguarding, SEND, SEMH and pastoral support

As with the curriculum section, we are committed to assessing the pastoral needs of the students as they return to school. We recognise that such a period of absence brings its challenges and there will be more time spent as form groups to check on the pupils. We shall be working with our SEND students to support their learning and develop plans moving forward. I have always prioritised the wellbeing of staff and students and am delighted to announce the opening (from September) of our new **Student Welfare Hub**. This facility (in the former Food Technology block) brings together the SEMH and newly extended SEND team and provides a new student services reception. The students will find out more about this at the start of term, but I am delighted that we have been able to expand our pastoral support capacity at this vital time. Please highlight any concerns on the MS Forms link on p4 or contact the relevant Head of Year.

Attendance and guidance on symptoms and shielding

From the start of this new academic year in September pupil attendance will be mandatory and the usual rules on attendance will apply. Therefore if your child is not attending school for any reason you must ring the school in the morning to report the absence. The relevant attendance code will then be entered accordingly. Although school attendance is mandatory from the start of the autumn term, there are some circumstances where pupils cannot attend school due to coronavirus (COVID-19). It is the Secretary of State's expectation that no parent will be penalised for following official public health advice for their child not attending a given session.

In turn the information below is taken from the most [recent guidance](#) that has been published on the Government website:

- Shielding advice for all adults and children paused on 1 August 2020. This means that even the small number of pupils who will remain on the shielded patient list can return to school, as can those who have family members who are shielding. If in future, rates of the disease rise in local areas, children still on the shielding list (or family members still on the shielding list) from that area, and that area only, may be contacted by the government and advised to stay at home and shield during the period where rates remain high. Families will receive a letter if they are required to shield again that parents will be able to share with the school.
- If a pupil has symptoms of COVID-19 however mild, they must self-isolate for at least 10 days from when their symptoms started. They should arrange to have a [test](#) to see if they have COVID-19.
- If a pupil tests negative and if they feel well and no longer have symptoms similar to coronavirus (COVID-19), they can stop self-isolating and return to school.
- If they have tested positive then they must continue to stay off school for the remainder of the self-isolation period.
- If they are not experiencing symptoms but have tested positive for COVID-19 they also must self-isolate for at least 10 days, starting from the day the test was taken. If they develop symptoms during this isolation period, they must restart their 10-day isolation from the day they develop symptoms.
- After 10 days, if they still have a temperature they should continue to self-isolate and seek medical advice. They do not need to self-isolate after 10 days if they only have a cough or loss of sense of smell or taste, as these symptoms can last for several weeks after the infection has gone.
- If one member of the household has symptoms then all other household members must stay at home and not leave the house for 14 days. The 14-day period starts from the day when the first person in the household became ill or if they do not have symptoms, from the day their test was taken. If anyone else in

the household starts displaying symptoms, they must stay at home for at least 10 days from when their symptoms appear, regardless of what day they are on in their original 14-day isolation period.

- If a member of the household has symptoms and the pupil has been self-isolating as a result but the member of the household subsequently tests negative, the pupil can stop self-isolating and can return to school. If the household member tests positive, the pupil should continue self-isolating for the full 14 days from when the member of their household first had symptoms.
- If a pupil is absent from school due to any of the circumstances above then you must inform the school that this is the case. A separate attendance code relevant to COVID-19 has been established to allow outbreaks to be monitored and also to not negatively affect a pupils attendance record.

With the recent restrictions and disruption to school life, attendance is an ever more important factor that all pupils must focus on during this new academic year. Attendance has a direct correlation with performance. Equally, pupils' health and the health of their families is of the utmost importance too. We may need to risk assess the return of some students to school. Therefore if you are concerned, unsure or require any further support then please contact the school via the [MS Forms link](#).

Behavioural expectations and school policies

We continue to expect the highest standards of behaviour and conduct of the students. We have re-written our behaviour policy, with reference to specific issues related to re-opening and the need for social distancing and hygiene, along with expectations for classrooms, at lesson change-overs and in non-contact time. We will run school detentions, but this will be organised in year groups and we will communicate more on this. All updated [policies](#) will be available on our school website.

Transport and arrival/departure

It is really important that the students stick to their designated times for arrival and departure. The government has produced [guidance on the use of transport](#) which is important to read and understand. Students and parents should refrain from congregating at the school gates. We are currently in conversation with the Green Bus with regards to exact arrangements, but they have published Covid-19 arrangements on their [website](#).

Uniform, lockers and sports store orders

We are expecting all students to return to school in full uniform, as this is an important part of our ethos. There will be restricted access to lockers, so students should bring their daily requirements in a small bag. Students who have PE or games will come to school in their QMGS tracksuit and sports kit, so as to minimise use of the changing rooms. Swimming lessons will not operate at the beginning of term.

The sports store will be open for purchases, but access will be limited. Orders will be bagged up and delivered to the year group zone in school for collection on the dates below. Please place all orders as soon as possible for processing. If you have any queries please contact Mrs Hopkinson on sports-store@qmgs.walsall.sch.uk

Year 7	Thu 3 Sep (12.30-15.00) and Fri 4 Sep (10.45-15.30)
Year 8	Thu 10 Sep
Year 9	Tue 8 Sep
Year 10	Mon 7 Sep
Years 11-13	Wed 9 Sep

Extra-curricular provision, music lessons and educational visits

There will be limitations on what we can provide in terms of extra-curricular activities, especially where this involves different year groups coming together. We will endeavour to adapt our provision and students will find out about this in due course, including from the CCF. It is our intention to run peripatetic music lessons and we will communicate on the exact arrangements for these. No overnight visits will take place in the first term. We will confirm arrangements for after school activities, such as the H/W club, in due course.

Catering and the use of parent pay

Harrisons caterers will be providing a modified food service at lunchtimes from September. As per the table on p2, lunch service will be split over p4 and the regular lunchtime and the canteen will be segregated. A cleaning service will operate between sittings. The sixth form will still use Café 6 and there will be a service from the Bateman room,

which students can eat outside on the newly purchased furniture next to the Student Welfare Hub. To make the service more efficient, we would like students to make more use of the existing pre-order service and there will be no facility to use the cash revaluer on site – please top-up student accounts using Parent Pay. There will be no break service, so students will need to bring any snacks and drinks into school with them.

Non-contact time

As set out on p2, each year group will be allocated zones for non-contact time. There will be restrictions on activities (i.e. ball games).

Sixth form matters

There are a number of issues that relate specifically to the sixth form, more detail of which will be circulated to the students at the beginning of term:

- *Signing in/out* – we will be operating flexibly so that we manage the number of students onsite. We will confirm the exact arrangements for this, as we may not be able to use the finger print scanners
- *Supervised private study* – this will take place either in the year group zone or within the sports hall at exam desks
- *MAT lessons* – these will operate as normal, but more guidance will be given to the students on transport and routines at other schools
- *Collier centre* – there will be restricted access to the Collier Centre as a social space and the Bateman Room will be closed at break and lunch (apart from to provide an external food service)
- *Form groups* – as the sixth form tutor groups are a mix of Y12 and Y13 students, we will be combining the groups (e.g. 6HA and 6HB), with one tutor taking the Y12 students from one group and one the Y13s

Parent contact and visits to the school

Up to the start of term, please use the [MS form](#) to raise concerns and questions. During term time, please continue to correspond with the school in the usual ways, but be minded that we are restricting the amount of visitors onsite. Please do not arrive onsite without an appointment.

Concluding thoughts

September will be a challenging and anxious time, but I am sure that staff and students alike are looking forward to the return. I ask that all students and parents read this guidance carefully, including the embedded links. We are trying to make the school environment as safe as possible, but this will need the co-operation of the whole community.

Thank you for your ongoing support at this time.

Yours sincerely



Richard Langton, Headteacher