

17 July 2020

Dear Parent/carers

### **Welcoming Back All Students in September**

As we come to the end of the academic year I want to thank all parent/carers, students and staff for how the school community has worked together over the past few months.

The very good news is that the school will be returning in full from Monday 7 September with our new Year 7s returning on Thursday 3 September. This means that every year group will be able to attend, every day. This is vital for your child's education and wellbeing and is something that has been welcomed across the school community.

Following the publication of the Department for Education's guidance for reopening schools, we are now finalising our risk assessment so that we can reopen for everyone in line with Government advice. Key to this will be ensuring that everyone in school follows excellent hygiene practices and that students' stay within their year group bubbles in order to limit the number of people they come into contact with at school.

This will mean a number of important changes to how the school runs next term. Please be aware some details may change but we will keep you updated:

- When students are in school they will remain in their year group bubble. We will be avoiding mixing of year groups at all times.
- The Government has advised walking or cycling to school wherever possible to reduce the use of public transport. If students need to use public transport they should try and travel with students from their year group bubble and practice social distancing. If your child is travelling on public transport, they will be required to wear a mask.
- The start of the school day for Year 7, 11 and the 6<sup>th</sup> Form will remain unchanged. Students in these year groups should arrive at school between 8.20am – 8.30am. Form Time will start at 8.35am. The finish of the school day for these year groups will remain unchanged (2.55pm). The School will be running intervention classes to help your child catch up and we anticipate different groups of students being asked to stay later.
- The start of the school day for Year 8, 9 and 10 will be later. Students in these year groups should arrive at school between 8.40am – 8.50am. Lesson 1 will start at 8.55am. The finish of the school day for these year groups will change (3.15pm). Students will have Form Time from 2.55pm – 3.15pm. The School will also be running intervention classes to help these year groups catch up and we anticipate different groups of students being asked to stay later. We will contact all parent/carers in September with our academic support plans.
- On Wednesday the School has different timings. Therefore, Year 7, 11 and the 6<sup>th</sup> Form should arrive at school between 8.20am – 8.30am for the start of period 1 at 8.35am. Year 8, 9 and 10 should arrive at school between 8.40am – 8.50am for the start of period 1 at 8.55am. This will be a shorter period 1. At the end of the day there will be a staggered departure with students leaving between 2.25pm – 2.35pm.
- In addition to year groups starting at different times, year groups will need to access the school via different entrances. Year 7 and Year 10 will use Berwick Road Student Entrance, Year 8 and 6<sup>th</sup> Form will use Elsa Road Student Entrance. Year 9 and Year 11 will use the side entrance on Elsa Road next to the school field.
- Year groups will be zoned within the school so that students have access to a minimal number of classrooms. Older students in KS4 and KS5 will also have access to specialist teaching spaces where appropriate. Each zone will have allocated toilets and outdoor space that students will be able to access for break and lunch. The 6<sup>th</sup> Form will be based in Science and will have access to the 6<sup>th</sup> Form Centre; Year 11 will be based in Maths; Year

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10 will be based in Geography/Social Science & MFL; Year 9 will be based in History/Philosophy & Ethics and Media; Year 8 will be based in English; Year 7 will be in the Arts Block.

- Break and lunch times will be staggered and students will be separated into zoned year group areas and use of communal areas will be strictly controlled.
- Canteen food will only be available at lunchtime. Students will need to pre-order food and drink which will be ready to collect at lunchtime. Details of the pre-ordering system will be circulated before Monday 7 September. Students eligible for free school meals will return to having their lunch at school and will no longer receive lunch vouchers.
- All areas of the school will receive more frequent cleaning and there will be hand washing facilities or hand sanitiser that must be used when students arrive and leave school. We will continue to encourage students to wash their hands regularly and promote the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach for any sneezes or coughs.
- All sport and Physical Education lessons will be classroom-based for the first two weeks. We will then introduce PE lessons starting with KS4 and KS5 first. When students have been told that their normal PE lessons will be resuming they will be required to wear PE kit to school instead of their school uniform.
- Students must bring their own items of equipment to school (e.g. pens, pencils, etc.) as sharing of items will be allowed.
- Students are allowed to wear a face mask if they would like to, although, in line with Government guidance, they are currently not compulsory.
- If your child has Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) we will contact you directly at the start of term as there will be some alteration to the normal support offered. To confirm, The Elsa Centre will operate as normal.
- All students will be expected to wear the full school uniform.
- All exercise books will remain in your child's classroom.
- Co-curricular clubs and activities will not start immediately and when they do, they will operate within year group bubbles.
- All parent/carers are strongly encouraged to communicate with the school via phone or email. Staff will not be able to see parent/carers unless the meeting has been arranged.

By making these changes, we will be able to follow the latest Government guidance to ensure students are safe within school.

We know that all students will require some degree of catch up after the disruption of the past few months. It is therefore essential that every student attends every day from the beginning of term so that we can quickly return to normal curriculum content.

Attendance will be required at school and will be monitored as it has been in the past. Unauthorised absence will be treated as such and followed up accordingly.

We know that students thrive best when they have routine, consistency and stability around them. We will therefore be doing everything we can to ensure that, wherever possible, school life is as close to what our students are used to. Therefore, all Welling School's existing policies and expectations on issues such as behaviour, uniform and equipment will be in place as normal with updates as required to reflect adherence to safety and hygiene measures. As outlined in my letter dated 14 July 2020, from September 2020, students will not be able to use their mobile phone or other electrical device whilst on site. The school will also be moving to school detentions being completed on the same day. Parent/carers will be informed when their child will be required to stay after school. School detention will also take place in separate student year group zones. Mr Loizou will be writing to all parent/carers at the start of the term with an update on the School's Behaviour and Mobile Phone Policy.

The Government guidance has also set out what will happen if any student or member of staff displays symptoms of COVID-19. Firstly, it is essential that anyone – students, parents/carers and staff continues to follow the NHS guidance and that they do not come into school if they are experiencing any symptoms. Thus, we would ask every parent/carer to keep any child displaying symptoms of COVID-19 at home and immediately inform the school. Likewise, if any members of your household tests positive for COVID-19, please keep your child at home and inform us as soon as possible.

If a student becomes unwell at school with a high fever, new continuous cough or has a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell, they will be sent home. We will arrange for them to be looked after safely, separate from others, until they can be collected. If this occurs, they will be expected to self-isolate for at least 7 days and arrange to have a COVID-19 test.

Should we experience a confirmed case of COVID-19 within our school community, we will work closely with the Trust and Public Health England to ensure the situation is managed quickly and effectively. Using NHS Test and Trace data, they will advise us on what next steps we will need to take as a school. We will be putting in place stringent control measures as per the Department for Education guidance in order to minimise the need for a larger group of students to self-isolate should there be a positive case within school.

In the event of any large number of students having to self-isolate or in the event of a local lockdown that means we are required to close the school, we will immediately revert to the online learning that has been working well this term. We very much hope that we do not need to return to any form of lockdown, but, if we do, we are confident that we will be able to continue with all students' learning from home. Once again, the support of parent/carers in ensuring your child accesses these resources will be vital.

Finally, we know that some students will feel apprehensive about returning to school after such a long time away. This is completely understandable and is something that we expect will be more widespread than one might think. We will therefore be taking particular steps to ensure that our pastoral support for each student allows for this and provides time and space for any worries or concerns to be addressed so that each student is able to enjoy being back at school.

Thank you for your patience and understanding over the past few months. Everyone at Welling School is looking forward to welcoming our students back. We know that there is a great deal to do and that the year ahead may still be subject to some interruptions. However, we are entirely focused on making sure that in every lesson, every day, every student continues to learn and thrive.

With very best wishes.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Pett', written in a cursive style.

**Mr R Pett**  
**Headteacher**