



Biddenham

International School & Sports College

Principal: Mr David Bailey

Head of School: Ms Eleanor Grylls

10th March 2021

Dear Parents, Carers and Students,

Re: Monday 15th March re-opening - Year 7 and 8

Further to our letter last week we are now writing to you regarding the finer details of the return to school on the 15th March. We are very much looking forward to getting started and the resumption of school for all our young people; it's been lonely without them. However, although the opening of schools marks the beginning of the wider opening up of society, we are still not there yet and we must not be complacent. This means that the safety measures put in place for the Autumn term will need to continue now and well into the Summer term. Our students have a big role to play in all of this, by following all of the rules and routines to ensure the safety of all concerned - including the communities in which we all live.

Coronavirus Testing

Thank you so much for your support with the mass testing programme this week. We have been overwhelmed by the large number of students participating and demonstrating their commitment to keeping our community safe. Students have behaved with maturity and just taken it all in their stride. Our delivery of home testing kits should be arriving this Friday, so we plan to distribute them to students on Monday 15th March. Further details and instructions will be sent home on Monday to accompany the tests.

As it has been a while since we've all been in school, the rest of this letter will focus on a few reminders with regard to organisation and safety. On Monday 15th March Year 7 and 8 students will need to arrive at school at 7.55am and go straight to their tutor bases. They will then spend tutor time and lesson 1 going through our safety briefing and focusing on health and wellbeing. Please see the table below for a reminder of the tutor bases:

Year 7		Year 8	
KRW/IM	V6	SDS	E3
EAP	V5	CM/CJF	E4
MLG	V3	AH	H1
GM	V2	DA/JLF	E2
HCB	V4	SM	E1
RJC	V7	RP	D7
LMC/TN	V1	CD	T17
EC/OF	V8	PBN	T14

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The induction session will include details about measures that will continue to be in place that they will need to be aware of and adhere to, such as:

- Regular hand cleansing and sanitising.
- Students cleaning desks in classrooms after use.
- Doors and windows remaining open to ensure ventilation and minimise touching of handles and surfaces.
- Teachers and Teaching Assistants will wear masks where two metre social distancing cannot take place.
- There is a clear one way system in place for students and staff to follow.
- At break and social times the students will need to stay in their year groups and in allocated 'zoned' areas of the school. Students will be expected to remain outside as much as possible.
- Students will need to bring lunch with them still. We will continue to prepare packed lunches for students eligible for free school meals.
- There will be staggered starts at the start of the day, lunchtime and at the end of the day and a tutorial at the beginning of the day for all students.
- Parents and carers are requested not to come to the school to drop their child off, unless by car. When dropping students off parents and carers should stay in the car at all times.

An updated version of our risk assessment can be found on the school website, or click [this link](#).

The School Day

There will be some slightly staggered starts to the school day, to allow students time to sanitise their hands on arrival, however, this will be minimal in order to limit the disruption to families. Students need to arrive promptly at their designated time and leave site swiftly at the end of the school day. We will restart extra-curricular straight away on Monday 15th March. It will be the same programme that was running in the Autumn term. Full details can be found on the PE google classrooms.

NEW TIMINGS OF THE SCHOOL DAY – SEPTEMBER 2020

Year 7 and 8				Tuesday			
Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday							
	Time	Mins	Break/Transition		Time	Mins	Break/Transition
Tutor	7.55 - 8.20	25		Staff training	7.45 - 8.30	45	
Transition			5	ELS	8.45 - 9.15	30	
Period 1	8.25 - 9.25	60		Break			15
Transition			5	Period 2	9.30 - 10.30	60	
Period 2	9.30 - 10.30	60		Transition			5
Break			10	Period 3	10.35 - 11.35	60	
Period 3	10.40 - 11.40	60		Transition			10
Transition			5	Period 4	11.45 - 12.40	55	
Period 4	11.45 - 12.40	55		Lunch	12.40 - 13.20		40
Lunch	12.40 - 13.20		40	Period 5	13.20 - 14.20	60	
Period 5	13.20 - 14.20	60		Leave	14.20		
Leave	14.20						

Face coverings

We will continue to ask that all students wear a face covering in classrooms, communal areas and corridors in line with the latest government guidance for schools. This guidance has been strengthened to include wearing face coverings in classrooms where a two metre distance cannot be maintained. At Biddenham we were already wearing face coverings and we believe it was one of the contributing factors to our low positive case rate and our ability to keep students in school. We greatly appreciate your ongoing support with this matter.

Travel to school

We encourage all students to walk or cycle to school if at all possible. This is by far the healthiest travel option. Should students need to travel by public transport they will need to follow the [government guidelines](#) about wearing face coverings. We ask that if a parent or carer is bringing their child to school they remain in their cars and if students are walking they must not meet and arrive in friendship groups. Please use the drop off and pick up points along the drive and do not park or drop off and pick up on the turning circle. Both gates (north and south) will be opened for students to get on and off site within a set period of time.

Attendance

Attendance is again compulsory, as the government expects all students to attend school. The usual rules will apply, meaning we will be recording attendance and following up on any absences. However, in line with the current government guidance, students who are **clinically extremely vulnerable** should not attend school. If you have received clinical or public health advice that your children should still remain at home, please let us know and continue to follow that guidance. You should contact us by emailing the school at enquiries@biddenham.beds.sch.uk or call 01234 342521. We will continue to offer remote education to these students.

Uniform

Students should wear full school uniform on their return. We'd like to see everyone return looking smart (after being in track suits for two months) and learning ready. Details are available on the school website and a link can be found [here](#). Just a reminder that our basic school uniform items are plain black full length trousers, plain black skirt, plain white shirt/blouse, black or navy blue shalwar kamiz/jalbaab and black shoes and can be purchased relatively cheaply from any high street or supermarket clothes retailer. However, if you are experiencing any difficulty, please contact enquiries@biddenham.beds.sch.uk or call 01234 342521 and we will assist where we can. We would also like to encourage students, parents and carers to ensure that uniforms are cleaned as regularly as possible.

To avoid compromising social distancing in changing rooms, if students have PE or Dance on their timetable then on those days they should attend in their PE kit. It is advisable to have more than one set of PE kit if possible, and/or wash it regularly. Blazers or coats can be worn over the top, but there should not be any hoodies or other non-uniform tops worn.

Equipment

We will continue to avoid the unnecessary sharing of equipment, so here is the equipment list as a reminder:

- A school bag - ideally a rucksack.
- Pencil case including pens, colours, pencils, ruler and highlighters.
- Calculator and geometry set.
- Chromebook - charged and in the protective case.
- Earbuds/phones - to be able to hear sound on chromebooks.
- Face coverings(s) and bag for storage.

Additionally, for health and safety reasons:

- Water bottle - filled, to reduce the need for using water fountains.
- Winter coat (waterproof with a hood) - breaks and lunches will predominantly be outside and windows will remain open in classrooms.
- Umbrella - in case of wet weather.
- Antibacterial wipes/gels and a pack of tissues - whilst we are providing antibacterial gels at every building entrance, we strongly recommend students have their own for personal use.

Catering

Access to our catering facilities will continue to be limited in the short term, in the interest of health and safety. Students should bring a packed lunch (please avoid food with nuts and fizzy drinks) to school and enough water for the school day to reduce the need for using water fountains. Students eligible for free school meals will be provided with a packed lunch at school. There will not be any opportunity to buy food in school for the time being.

Additional support

Lockdown has been a challenging period for all of us, and we'd like to thank you for your continuing patience and support during this difficult and uncertain time. Your support in helping your children learn from home over this period has also been greatly appreciated. There is a [link here](#) to a Local Authority questionnaire about remote learning similar to one conducted in the previous lockdown, your feedback is important in helping us improve. Please do contact us with any questions or queries, or if your child needs any further support emailing the school at enquiries@biddenham.beds.sch.uk or call 01234 342521.

We can all agree that a return to school now is vital for young people in many ways. However, contrary to the negative media headlines we believe that although our students have missed learning in some respects they will also have learned so much from living through a pandemic. They will become resilient, creative, inventive and kind human beings who will lead us all into a better future and it is our job now to help them on their way. We can't wait to see them all - our Biddenham family back together again!

Warm regards,



Mr D Bailey
Principal



Ms E Grylls
Head of School