

Dear Parents and Carers

I do hope that Highdown families enjoyed some good summer times together over the last few weeks. Much has been going on at Highdown over the main school closure with a very successful summer school run by Dr Capaldi and team for our new students. Work has been going on to repair ancient roofs on the sports centre and there will be scaffolding in place for a few weeks around that area. Thanks to the Estates team for their hard work.

It was great to have proper results days to celebrate our students' achievements again this year. We are so proud of Highdowners and wish Year 13 all the best on their next stage of life and are pleased to welcome back so many Year 11s into joining our Sixth Form.

Thank you for supporting the testing schedule as we return to school. Please can I entreat all to keep up the regime through the term. This was not the case for all last term and with reduction in other precautions in society, I am sure all will feel happier if we are confident in our testing covering the whole community.

Families will know that there are few requirements in the DfE guidelines for schools to put in place. We are happy for students and adults to wear facemasks if they wish to and those travelling by public transport should be wearing them.

Please see link to current Government Covid guidance:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-list-of-guidance>

We are staggering break and lunchtimes for the different key stages to give more space inside the Gallery. On PE days, students should come to school in their kits. This seems to have been very popular as well as reducing crowding in small changing rooms.

We will be keeping windows open for ventilation. The Government has advised that carbon dioxide detectors will be supplied to schools during the autumn term.

Settling into a new academic year with high expectations on academic achievement and personal development are always the priorities in September. I know families will support school in achieving this after so much disruption. However, there should not be any panic about lost learning, teachers are skilled in assessing how to bridge gaps and to make progress from each individual's starting point.

We look forward to welcoming all students back to the new school term, especially our new Year 7 and 12 students. Individual letters have gone to parents regarding times of return and on-site testing.

Yours sincerely

Rachel Cave
Headteacher