



HIGHDOWN SCHOOL AND SIXTH FORM CENTRE

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Dear Students, Parents and Families

I hope this mail finds you well.

Following on from my previous mail regarding our plans for reopening, there has been considerable work and consultation going on to make sure we can open with full curriculum in September. Our model is based on DfE guidance, Association of Schools and College Leaders, consultation with our Reading colleagues at our Heads and Principals group and United Learning models and guidance endorsed by DfE.

The guidance gives considerable freedom to schools because of our own individual circumstances. I will set out our high level plans. Detailed planning has of course been carried out, however the core principles are most important and it is highly possible that we may receive further iterations of guidance in the coming weeks. Hence sharing the detail of plans would be unhelpful and could be confusing.

The decisions we have taken are to mitigate the risks of transmission in School.

Principles:

- Keep movement around the school to a minimum to reduce numbers of interactions
- Keep year groups together and different groups apart
- Reduce flow rates at break and lunchtime by staggering timings
- Maintain hygiene reminders and provision
- Increased cleaning

The guidance is clear about teaching strategies that must be employed to keep the teachers at a distance from students - whole class based with the teacher at the board. With high quality questioning, formative assessment, retrieval practice and creative approaches to presentation of curriculum material, Highdown teachers will keep learning as rich and engaging as possible.

Key Stage Three will have the majority of lessons in their mentor groups in mentor group bases. The exception is for subjects requiring a specialist room for teaching - for example science. Additionally in years 8 and 9, students have chosen different foreign languages to study so this and some subjects blocked with languages, will be taught in different groups.



At year 10 and above, the year groups will be taught in their sets and options and not in mentor groups. This is necessary as students have chosen their options and teaching in mentor groups is not practical. Our students arrive in an orderly fashion to school over a range of time, therefore we do not believe that it is necessary to stagger the start of the day. We would ask that families support the aims of the Government by students walking or cycling to school, whenever possible and having public transport as the last resort if walking or cycling is not feasible.

We will be releasing students through period 5 in a staggered fashion. Therefore period 5 may be 30 minutes only for students on some days. We will arrange a rota if this requirement is still necessary in September. All 1400 students departing at 3.05pm would necessitate closer contact. Whilst we do not wish to do this, we will be releasing students that have core PE period 5 each day after lunch to take a significant number of students off site earlier. We will be providing challenges for students to do at this time out of school (similar to the lock down approach) to gain house points and to promote keeping active.

We ask parents not to wait at the school gates as this will create congestion. This is probably most important for year 7 parents. We normally find that no parents wait after the first week. On the first two days when it is only year 7 and 12 in school, then please do feel free to collect at the gate, but we will be moving people on promptly.

On days when a student has PE, we ask that they come to school in their kit. Changing rooms require closer contact than classes and we believe this mitigates against transmission risk.

We will continue to promote good hygiene and there are hand sanitising stations for students to use as they arrive at school and through the day at transition times. Staggering breaks and lunches spreads out the use of toilet facilities which will be topped up with soap through the day. We will ask students to alert us if stocks should run low, though we have planned additional checks through the day. Please continue to impress the importance of the hygiene message at home and also about distancing between students on the way to and from school to support the messages that we are giving out.

For any member of our community presenting with symptoms we have a clear flow chart of actions from Public Health England. We will contact parents of symptomatic students and require their collection immediately from Highdown. I am sure it goes without saying, to not send children to school if they are unwell.

Year 10 and 12 have returned with positive attitudes and calm good spirits. It has been superb to see them and we are looking forward to seeing the rest of the school back with us.

We will be sharing end of term celebrations and messages next week.

Have a great weekend.



Ms Cave
Headteacher