



27th August 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

Pre-term Update

I hope you are all well. With luck this letter comes at a point in the holidays where you have enough time to deal with any issues that come out of it, but doesn't feel too intrusive!

First of all, could I please remind you that the new Parent Guide is available to view or download on the [school website](#)? You should find most of the answers to questions about day-to-day school life. In terms of preparation for the start of term, I hope you will find the following points useful. Please also bear in mind that you can contact us from next Tuesday 31st August onwards on 01784 457275 or at info@matthew-arnold.surrey.sch.uk.

1. Testing

We are carrying out asymptomatic testing for all students for whom we have your permission on Wednesday 1st September and Monday 6th September in the Sports Hall. You will shortly receive registration details for these tests. A reminder that students do not need to wear uniform on the Wednesday, and will only be onsite for their test. Students will need to tell staff when they arrive if they do NOT want the new nasal-only tests. We can then administer the throat swab test.

2. Uniform

I hope that any uniform supply problems have been resolved. Please do let us know if there are still issues. I would like to draw your attention to the relevant sections of the [parent guide](#) or the letter sent to you at the end of last term and to remind your children that nails, piercings, hair colours etc must be as described there.

3. Food

We are now able to offer food in the Café before school, during first break and at lunch. In the morning, free porridge is offered to all students, although there will also be a wide range of breakfast products for students to purchase. There is a knock-on impact to the timings of the day so that we can offer a good selection at first break - 5 minutes has been added. Please see the next section!

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4. Times of the school day

Time	Activity
08.00 - 08.30	Breakfast
08.40 - 09.00	Tutor/assembly
09.00 - 09.50	Period 1
09.50 - 10.40	Period 2
10.40 - 11.00	Break
11.00 - 11.50	Period 3
11.50 - 12.40	Period 4
12.40 - 13.30	Lunch
13.30 - 14.20	Period 5
14.20 - 15.10	Period 6

5. Website

We are rationalising the tabs and sections of the website so that it is easier to know where to go for the specific information needed. Thank you for your patience whilst we have been operating under Covid restrictions and needing to maintain a tab for changeable items. We always welcome your [feedback](#) on user-friendliness, accuracy and content. Please don't hold back!

6. Covid

We are still operating under restrictions, but school will feel very different from last year - long may this last!

The main changes are:

- Self-isolation for under-18s no longer needed if they have been in close contact with someone who tests positive
- Tracing of contacts will all be carried out by NHS Test and Trace. This does not require access to the app
- Contacts will be asked to carry out a PCR test, and will not need to isolate while they wait for the result
- Bubbles and zones no longer in place

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- No face coverings required by anyone, although individuals may choose to do so. They are, however, recommended on public or school bus transport
- Visitors (including parents) are welcome to come to school

What will remain in place is:

- Self-isolation for anyone who tests positive for Covid
- Teams provision for students absent from school for Covid-related reasons (this does not count officially as absence)
- The focus on handwashing, hygiene, sanitisation and cleaning
- The one-way system - it works, and the school will be at its fullest ever this year!

We have a risk assessment in place, which has been fully updated to reflect these changes. It will be available on the school website as soon as it has been approved at BET level.

We must remember, however, how quickly things can change. We do have an outbreak contingency plan in place (also on the website) and all planning for future events will take this into account. Events such as Open Evenings etc, whilst now authorised by the government, seem to go against their advice on social distancing, which is that you should aim to avoid lengthy proximity with **'people you don't normally meet'**.

7. New site layout

The contractors will have left site before term starts. This means the site and road layout will look very different. You should not drive into school when dropping off or collecting students for the normal school day (unless you have an arrangement with the school), but you are welcome to do so when visiting. Please drive very slowly and follow all signage!

I look forward to seeing your children next week and wish you all a very pleasant bank holiday weekend!

With very best wishes

Mary Gould
Headteacher