



The Matthew Arnold School

Part of the Bourne Education Trust



24th August 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

School reopening

I hope that you are all well and that life is beginning to show some signs of returning to normality. I know that schools reopening will play a significant part in this and I am very pleased to say that plans for a full return to school have been approved. The school term will start in the following way:

Date	Groups	Programme
Tuesday 1 st September	Staff Inset	Training and preparation
Wednesday 2 nd September	Staff Inset	Training and preparation
Thursday 3 rd September	Year 7 only in school 9.00 am - 1.00 pm	Orientation and training
Friday 4 th September	1. Year 7 in school 9.00 am - 3.00 pm 2. Year 11 in school 10.00 am - 1.00 pm 3. <i>Years 8 - 10 remote student conference</i>	1. Lesson induction 2. Orientation and training 3. <i>Orientation and training</i>
Monday 7 th September	All students in school full-time	Normal teaching

The following details of our plans to reopen adhere to the latest [government guidance](#). This guidance has been expanded on by our academy trust, the Bourne Education Trust, and finally interpreted by the school to reflect its local setting. Full documentation is available to view and download on the website.

Student bubbles and zones

Each year group will form a 'bubble', which will have minimal contact with other bubbles, ie students in other year groups. To facilitate these bubbles, year groups will also be allocated designated zones of the school. These zones extend to include all aspects of the school day: entrance to the school site, entry into the building, lessons, breaks, toilets and catering.

The school day

The school day is unchanged in that all students receive 5 60-minute lessons, a 20-minute tutor period, a break of 20 minutes and a lunch break of 40 minutes. However, to enable the 5 bubbles to remain separate from each other, we will be staggering start and finish times. Entry to school site is limited to staff and students only. There will be two entrances - the main entrance on Kingston Road and a pedestrian entrance from Edinburgh Drive. The gate from the alley between Kingston Road and Hazel Grove will not be in use.

Year group	Start	Finish	Entry/Exit
Year 7	8.40 am	3.00 pm	Kingston Road
Year 8	8.40 am	3.00 pm	Edinburgh Drive
Year 9	9.00 am	3.20 pm	Kingston Road
Year 10	9.00 am	3.20 pm	Edinburgh Drive
Year 11	8.40 am	3.00 pm	Kingston Road



Catering

Food will be provided by our caterers at lunchtimes only, and will need to be pre-ordered. This will be done by students in tutor time or period 1, depending on the format of their day. It will then be available for collection at designated points. All snacks for morning break will need to be purchased outside school hours. Families who are eligible for free school meals will have further details sent to them. Each year group bubble will have access to a cold water dispenser. Students need to have their own water container with them.

Toilets

All year group bubbles will have their own allocated toilets. Students will be briefed on the necessity of hygiene and how to maintain good hygiene standards when using toilets.

Transport

We would like to encourage as many students as possible to **walk** to school and to set up buddy groups within their own age bubbles. We have allocated each year group bubble its own area to leave **bicycles** if this is the preferred method of transport. However, I would remind parents and carers that road users have become used to emptier roads. Students cycling to school should wear helmets at all times and respect the rules of the road, taking extra caution to remain safe from other road users. For many families, **cars** are the only option. Please respect the safety and privacy of our neighbours when dropping children near school, and again remember that other road users are not used to the school run. Please check government advice on **car-sharing**. Students taking **public transport** should abide by the rules stipulated by the travel company, including the **667 bus**. This is likely to involve the safe wearing of masks. We will provide bins for the disposal of masks at both entrances to school.

Teaching and the curriculum

We are offering a full curriculum, and students in year groups 9, 10 and 11 will continue with their planned GCSE courses. Students will be based in zones, where they will remain unless moving to a specialist classroom. It is possible that students will remain in the same classroom for many of their lessons. Teachers and other staff may move across bubbles and zones, so the idea is that the teachers come to the children, rather than the other way around.

Stationery and equipment

All students will be provided with a pencil case providing basic equipment. They should keep this with them, using equipment sensibly and sparingly. They will be provided with exercise books as usual, but these will not be taken in by the class teacher. Students will have to take a level of responsibility for their own equipment that many of them may find challenging to begin with.

New ways of working

We are very keen to maintain some of the practices that we used to such good effect during lockdown. Microsoft Teams will become a part of each student's life, and is likely to provide the platform for homework, out-of-class assignments and assessment of work done. Larger gatherings, such as assemblies, will be replaced by Teams meetings and we are increasing the number and usage of iPads available for student use.

Mobile phones

Our policy on mobile phones has been changed to reduce the level of administration needed. Students may bring a mobile phone onto the school site, but the gate-to-gate rule applies. Phones must be switched off

and out of site at all times while the student is on the school site. If a phone is seen or heard, or if we have evidence that a phone has been used, we will confiscate it for 5 nights. If this period falls over the weekend, the phone will remain in school, even if this means the confiscation period is extended. For example, if a phone is confiscated on a Monday, the fifth night of confiscation would fall on a Friday. In effect, the phone will be returned the following Monday as the student leaves the site to go home. A simple pay as you go replacement phone can be offered on request to cover the period of confiscation. Parents will always be informed if a phone has been confiscated.

Uniform

Full school uniform is required. This covers all aspects of the uniform, including footwear, hair colour, makeup and jewellery. Students who arrive at school incorrectly presented, without a satisfactory note of explanation, will be sent home to change. All jewellery apart from a simple stud in each ear or an agreed religious symbol will be confiscated as per the mobile phone policy above. False nails or eyelashes of any description are not acceptable. Students who roll up skirts or sleeves will be asked to stop and roll them down fully.

Behaviour

We know that many students will be nervous about returning to school. The extra limitations imposed because of COVID-19 will exacerbate this anxiety and it is vital that we all work together to support each other as we learn to become a community again. COVID-19 is not a funny situation, and we will not tolerate silly or thoughtless behaviour that unnecessarily worries other members of the community. Students will need to abide by the extra precautions taken in terms of remaining within their bubbles and zones. They will be expected to co-operate fully with health and safety measures aimed at reducing the spread of infection, and they will be expected to manage their own behaviour in a mature way. We all want this return to school to work, and it will do if the students display the standard of behaviour we have come to expect. I would like to add that I feel extremely positive about this; the way that students have conducted themselves throughout lockdown has only strengthened my pride in them.

Health and safety

We have completed and reviewed a comprehensive and dynamic risk assessment commissioned by the Bourne Education Trust from their Health and Safety consultants, Carstens and Robinson. This risk assessment provides the principles and foundations on which our reopening plan has been drawn up. It is available to view on the school website, together with all relevant reopening documentation. It works on the basis of bubbles and zones, enhanced cleaning measures, the necessity for all site users to maintain the necessary standards of hygiene, include regular handwashing or sanitisation, and a clear understanding of how the virus works and the measures to take to avoid it or to reduce its impact in suspected or confirmed cases.

COVID-19

Please do not send your child into school if he or she display any of the following symptoms:

- a high temperature - this means they feel hot to touch on their chest or back (you do not need to measure their temperature)
- a new, continuous cough - this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if they usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)

- a loss or change to their sense of smell or taste - this means they've noticed they cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

They should self-isolate for 10 days from the day the symptoms started. All other members of the household should stay at home and not leave the house for 14 days. Please let the school know. Full guidance on what to do can be found [here](#).

If a child or member of staff displays any of the above symptoms while at school, the measures as stipulated by the [government](#) will be taken.

Social distancing

Whilst bubbles and zones in effect replace the idea of social distancing, we will still maintain clear and demonstrable distancing wherever possible. Whilst students will be working in close proximity to each other, physical contact will be kept to a minimum. Staff will act as role models and have their own bases to avoid large gatherings. Duties will be enhanced to monitor staff and student behaviour at all times. Please note that as teachers and staff can cross bubbles and zones, they will maintain distance from students wherever possible.

Out of school

Parents are asked to maintain the bubbles outside school, and to discourage close contact or socialising between children of different ages. We understand that many of you have more than one child at the school, and that this may be unworkable. In these cases, you are asked to try to ensure that your children maintain the same contacts, rather than having a fluid social circle.

I am aware that as you have read through this letter, many of you will have been unable to resist wondering how on earth this is going to work for you! I do need to ask you to look for solutions rather than problems if at all possible, so that you can operate within the guidelines above. The website, with its [FAQs](#) document, should also be a useful source of information, but do of course contact the school with any concerns where there does not appear to be a solution. We will do our very best to help you so that life is as manageable as possible.

I cannot tell you how much I am looking forward to seeing everyone. I would be lying if I said I were not nervous about the task ahead, but I am confident that everyone involved - the BET, the leadership team, the site team and indeed all my staff - has done over and above what has been advised to open the school again successfully in September, and I know that you and your children will respond in the same manner.

With all good wishes for the remainder of the summer holidays.



Mary Gould
Headteacher