

28 August 2020

Dear Parents

## **September 2020 Reopening**

I hope that you are well and have had a good summer. This letter sets out the changes that we have put in place to support the full reopening of Sexey's School. These changes and adjustments have been made to ensure the safety and well-being of all members of our school and wider community and in response to Government policy, public health advice and other key sources of information. This letter will provide information for you and your sons and daughters.

You will be very aware that within the Government guidance issued to schools we have been asked to take the following measures: -

- Ensure people that present with symptoms stay at home and do not enter the school site.
- Promote robust hand and respiratory hygiene.
- Have enhanced cleaning arrangements.
- Engage actively in NHS Test and Trace.
- Consider how to reduce the contacts between those in school and maximise distancing.

All our plans and safety measures have focused around two key principles: -

1. Maintaining the safety and well-being of staff and students.
2. Providing a high-quality learning experience for all students.

## **Accessing key information**

From 3 September you will find an area of the school website dedicated to the Reopening of Sexey's School, here you will find a number of documents including the Risk Assessments for both the school and boarding.

When new documents are created these will be added to this area and you will be notified via school comms.

## **Attendance**

Schools are required to return to their normal standards and expectations around attendance. We have an attendance target of 95% for all students. If you are having difficulties getting your child to attend school, please contact Mrs Lewis the Attendance Officer or your child's Head of Year so that we can arrange some support and help for you.

## **Student briefing**



All students will receive a briefing on the first day, to ensure that they understand the measures in place due to COVID-19 and our expectations of them to ensure we care for and protect each other.

## Social Distancing

We will be asking all students to maintain at least a 1m distance from one another where possible in particular: -

1. When arriving at school.
2. When walking around the school site.
3. At lesson change over.
4. At social times.
5. When leaving the school site.

Staff will be maintaining a 2m distance from students when possible and will ensure if they are within 2m of the students, that this is for the shortest period of time possible. This is a protective factor for staff and students as teachers will be teaching across multiple groups each day.

## School Uniform

Students will return in full school uniform as the guidance has now changed around this. Due to social distancing and small PE changing rooms, if students wish to wear their PE kit to school on the days that they have PE, they may do so during the period of time that we have COVID measures in place, this is a temporary change and will not remain in place long term.

The PE department will advise students what PE kit they need in their first lesson. Please ensure all students arrive in school on 7 September in full school uniform as there will be no PE lessons on this day.

## Face coverings

At this time, the Government guidance on the wearing of face coverings is evolving and there may be further announcements in the next week or so.

At Sexey's School (and in line with the World Health Organisation advice) we will be recommending that students wear a mask for parts of the school day. The mask should be either: -

- A disposable mask that is replaced in line with Public Health guidance or
- A reusable one that is washed daily at 60 degrees.

Please can I ask that you ensure the mask is appropriate and has no inappropriate images or words on it. We will be asking students to wear masks at the following times: -

- Arrival onto the school site.
- Lesson change overs.
- Assemblies.
- Social times.
- Leaving the school site.

At this point we will be asking students to remove their masks for lessons, however if the Government policy changes, we will of course review this. Students should carry a small, named plastic bag to place their mask in when they remove it (e.g. a small freezer/sandwich bag). Where a student has a medical condition that does not enable them to wear a mask, they will not be expected to wear one.

If a student is wearing/using their mask inappropriately and in a way that poses a risk to themselves or others we will contact Parents.

### Hand sanitizer

As a school we have multiple hand sanitizer stations around the school site, we will be expecting students to use these upon entry to each classroom. We would however recommend that students have their own hand sanitizer to support them using it as regularly as is appropriate and possible.

### Catch it, bin it and handwashing

Students will be encouraged to catch coughs and sneezes in tissue and place these in bins, and to wash their hands or use antibacterial hand gel after wards. We have purchased new bins across the site to ensure that the bins are all lidded, in line with public health guidance.

Students will be encouraged to wash hands regularly and especially before and after eating, when arriving onsite and after using the toilet.

### Equipment

Students will not be permitted to share equipment, so please ensure that students have an appropriately stocked pencil case, including a Maths set, a black or blue pen, a red and green biro and highlighters.

### Packed lunch and water bottles

Please can I ask you to ensure that your son or daughter has an appropriate bag to carry their packed lunch in and a shatterproof reusable bottle that is filled with water each day.

Due to the size of the KDR, and the current limitations on having large numbers of students across multiple years groups in a space at any one time, all day students should bring a packed lunch to school. Boarding students and those who qualify for Free School Meals will be able to access the KDR.

## Overview of measures in place

### Travel to and from school

#### **Walking to School**

Where possible we are asking that students walk to school and that they do so maintaining social distancing of at least 1m from non-family members.

#### **Sixth Form Minibus. School Bus, Public Transport**

These will be running, we ask that the students uphold the following safety measures: -

1. Wear a mask on the bus.
2. Use anti-bacterial gel as they get on the bus / train.
3. Where possible sit a seat apart from each other.
4. Travel with a window open where possible.

#### **Travelling by car**

The advice we have received is that where possible families should not lift share during this time due to the small closed environment of a car. Should you choose to lift share we would recommend following similar safety measure as those travelling by bus.

### Arrival at and departure from the school site

We have made the decision not to stagger the start of the school day, as this would cause additional stress and inconvenience to families who have students in multiple year groups. We have therefore decided to allocate set entry and exit points to the school site for each year group as set out below:

- Year 7 – Main entrance turn right
- Year 8 – Cliff
- Year 9 – Humanities gate
- Year 10 – New History entrance
- Year 11 – Boarding site exit next to staff car park
- Sixth Form – Sixth Form entrance at bus stop

Students will enter the site no earlier than 8:15am and no later than 8:35am. A bell will sound at 8:35am to move to Tutor Rooms for 8:40am. When students arrive on the school site, if it is before 8:35am they are to move to their designated social space area as set out below: -

- Year 7 – Outside main hall

Year 8 – New Squares  
Year 9 – Old Squares  
Year 10 – Upper Hack  
Year 11 – Lower Hack  
Sixth form – Sixth Form Centre

If your son or daughter is walking to school, they should walk to the entry point and then proceed directly to their allocated social space area. Students should enter the school site between 8:15 and 8:35am.

If your son or daughter is being dropped off at school, please use the boarding driveway circuit and lower car park to drop them off and collect them. Please do not exit your car and be mindful that all parents will be keen to drop off and pick up in an organised and efficient way. Please do not drop your son or daughter off by car before 8:15am. Once your son or daughter has been dropped off, they should move directly to their allocated social space area maintaining social distancing from other students.

Students will be dismissed at the end of the school day by their Period 5 teacher and will be expected to leave the site promptly upholding social distancing.

### **Students and staff well-being**

To support student's well-being, there will be a focus on Emotional Well-being during Tutor Time and PSHE over the first few weeks.

We have also made the decision not to limit students to the same classroom all day every day or to place them in the same learning group for five hours a day, five days a week as we do not believe this supports their emotional health and well-being or their learning and progress.

If your son or daughter is struggling, and you feel that they would benefit from extra help please contact their Head of Year. All staff email addresses are available on the school website.

Year 7 – Mr Oats  
Year 8 – Mr Carpenter  
Year 9 – Ms Sampson  
Year 10 – Mr Bomani  
Year 11 – Mr McLeish  
Year 12 and 13 – Mrs Elliot

### **Organisation of students**

We have reviewed the groups of students over the summer to reduce the number of contacts students have with each other and we will be operating a year group bubble system.



We have, where possible and appropriate placed students in the same group for some subjects for example Science and Maths, however where this is not appropriate and would impact negatively on the student's well-being or the quality of teaching and learning we have not done this.

This approach has enabled us to ensure students can access lesson by specialist teachers in specialist classrooms and also ensured that if we need to place a year group in self isolation we can quickly switch to online learning with TEAMS lessons in the same way as we did during Phase 3b Home Learning during lockdown.

Students will therefore be moving from classroom to classroom at the end of lessons allowing them to access fresh air, stretch their legs and prepare for their next lesson.

We are a small site and we have set up a one-way system through the buildings and around the whole school site. Students will be briefed on this during their first day back and staff will supervise and maintain social distancing at lesson changeovers.

### **Social time arrangements**

All students will have their normal breaks at school, and students will have set social time areas to use, supervised by staff. Where possible these will be outdoor spaces, weather permitting. Students will be encouraged to wear masks at social times and uphold social distancing.

Lunch will be a split lunch arrangement, with students in Years 7-9 having the first part of the lunch period whilst Years 10-13 have their tutor and assembly time. The last 20 minutes of lunch Year 7-9 will be in assembly and tutor time whilst the older students remain on their lunch break.

Due to the size of the KDR, and the current limitations on having large numbers of students across multiple years groups in a space at any one time, all Day students should bring a packed lunch to school, students will eat their lunches in the designated social space area. We will review this before October half term. As soon as we are able to resume normal lunchtime arrangements we will.

The KDR will be designated for boarding students who are in an additional bubble and those students who qualify for Free School Meals, who will have an allocated time to have their lunch. This is to again reduce the combinations of students and number of contacts a student experiences. On wet days, an indoor venue will be provided for each year group as their allocated social space area.

### **Cleaning**

Over the summer we have undertaken a deep clean of the school site in preparation for students return to school. In addition, we have increased the number of staff in the cleaning team and

allocated additional cleaners to be working during the school day to clean touch points and toilets throughout the day. At the end of each day all classrooms will be cleaned, and bins emptied. Equipment will not be shared across groups until it has been through cleaned in line with public health guidance.

As a number of different students will use each classroom, at the end of each lesson a student will be given an anti-bacterial wipe and asked to wipe down their chair and desk or the surface that they have touched, this wipe will then be disposed of in a bin with a lid. This ensures that the area is clean and safe for the next student.

All cleaning will be aligned to public health advice. We have purchased some fogging machines that will allow us the fog classrooms, dormitories and other spaces across the site on a regular basis to again provide additional protection for staff and students.

### Curriculum

We have maintained our broad and balanced curriculum and will not be removing any subjects from a student's curriculum.

Staff will be reviewing student's knowledge and understand of the topics studied during lockdown. They will then ensure their teaching plans reflect the students' needs to ensure each student achieves their full potential.

We will be providing additional support and intervention in line with the Government Catch Up Grant and I will write to you again about this in September.

### Teaching and Learning

Staff will be maintaining their high standards around teaching and learning and expectations of students in class. We appreciate that as is always the case at the start of a school year, we will need to revisit these with students and staff are prepared to do this.

The underlying principles we have are to provide high quality teaching and learning for all students, that challenges, motivates and inspires them and this will remain when the school reopens. Students can expect to experience: -

- Dedicated reading time each morning.
- The set entry and exit routines for lessons.
- The set 5-part lesson structure, with lessons starting with a low stakes quiz to help support memory recall.
- Well planned lessons that inspire, motivate, challenge and support all students.
- High quality verbal feedback in lessons to support learning.

You will appreciate that staff will need to undertake additional protective measures around handling students' books and so written teacher feedback will be approached in a slightly different way, which I will write to you about once term starts.

PE lessons will continue, and the team will be following each of the sport's governing body's COVID policy to ensure we protect our students from any increased risk in PE.

Classrooms will be set up as far as is possible using rows and students will not sit facing each other. Each class will have a set seating plan to allow us to quickly establish who are contacts in the event of a student testing positive for COVID-19.

Textbooks will not be shared across groups without following clear guidance on cleaning and leaving the books to "sit" for a period of time (at least 24 hours) before they are used by a different group. Homework will be set as we normally do, but staff will again be using methods to set, collect and provide feedback on homework that reduces the risk to themselves and students. You will therefore see homework set where possible using online tools including Teams and a range of subject specific apps. This is due to us needing to reduce the number of contacts between staff and students on student books and worksheets that we might have used previously.

Where possible classroom windows and doors will be open at all times to facilitate the movement of fresh air through the rooms.

### **Extra-curricular provision**

As the majority of our extra-curricular provision is across different year groups and due to the need to adapt to the new systems and processes in place for COVID-19, we will not be running any extra-curricular clubs up to half term. The local School Sports Leagues are all supporting this, with fixtures not taking place in at least the first half of term. We will review this position prior to half-term, and I hope we will be able to offer our wide ranging extra-curricular offer again from October half-term onwards. I appreciate your understanding on this matter and apologise for the inconvenience it may cause you.

### **Toilets**

Having looked at accessing additional temporary toilets and having sought advice from public health, we have been told that there is no increased risk to students by them using the same toilet facilities as a student in another year group. To ensure we protect student's appropriately all toilet facilities will be cleaned regularly throughout the day and will have anti-bacterial gel, soap, paper towels and a bin with a lid within them. We will also limit the number of users in each toilet area to reduce the risk of students gathering in this small confined space. Windows will remain open in toilet areas.

### **Boarding**





We have placed the students who board in two additional bubbles, an upper school bubble (Years 10-13) who will live in Macmillan House and a lower school bubble (Years 7-9) who will live in Coombe House. Each House will have separate mealtimes including breakfast to avoid the number of contacts for a student. The shared KDR will be cleaned after each sitting.

The boarding houses will all have additional measure in place to support students in staying safe and Mr Kershaw will write separately to Boarding parents with these.

I am delighted that we have signed up to the BSA COVID Safe Charter.

### Visitors

Please can I ask for your support in the helping us to reduce the number of visitors to the school site. Should you need to speak to a staff member please contact Reception and Mrs Brownlow will support you in arranging a telephone conversation with the most appropriate staff member. Alternatively, if you are able to email the staff member please feel free to do so. All staff email addresses are on the school website.

We will not be allowing visitors onto the school site without a prearranged appointment and they will be required to confirm they have no symptoms of COVID-19 and should not be self-isolating. Please do not get out of your car when you drop off or pick up your son or daughter from school to help us limit the number of people onsite and who could become contacts in the event of a positive case amongst the school community.

### Possible other questions you may have

1. **We have recently returned from a country where we are required to quarantine, can the children delay the start of term?**

Yes, if you have recently visited a country where quarantine is required upon your return please complete the full 14-day quarantine before sending your son or daughter to school.

2. **What happens if my son or daughter feels unwell at home?**

If your son or daughter is presenting with any of the symptoms of COVID-19 or any family member who lives with them, please do not send them to school. Please ring the absence line to notify us.

3. **What happens if my son or daughter becomes unwell at school?**

If a student becomes unwell with COVID-19 symptoms, they will be immediately isolated in the Health Centre and we will contact Parents and ask you to collect them at your earliest convenience. Staff in the Health Centre will wear PPE equipment as appropriate.

We have a small number of isolation rooms already set up but would ask that you arrange collection of your son or daughter as soon as is possible once called. Once you have collected your son or daughter please arrange a test at your earliest convenience, you will need to self-isolate with the whole family until the results have been given to you. Once you have the results, please notify the school.

4. **Who do I notify if a member of the family has a positive COVID test result or due to Track and Trace we have had to self-isolate?**

Please notify the school Attendance Officer, Mrs Lewis

5. **Who do I contact if I am worried about my son or daughter's emotional health and wellbeing or return to school?**

Please contact their Head of Year.

6. **Will the school close if there is a case of COVID-19?**

At the moment, the guidance is very clear that if 2 students in the same bubble have a positive test result for COVID-19 we are required to identify their contacts and ask them to self-isolate. The contacts within the bubble will self-isolate in line Government policy. Siblings of a contact who are in another bubble do not need to self-isolate as they are not a direct contact.

7. **If a bubble is self-isolating how do they access learning?**

If students in a bubble are self-isolating their lessons will switch to TEAMS lessons in a similar way to Phase 3B with a combination of online taught lessons and independent learning tasks and optional drop-in help session set up. Should this happen we will write to parents setting out how home learning will work.

8. **If a student is self-isolating with symptoms, are they expected to compete schoolwork?**

No, not if they are unwell. Staff will support them catching up once they are well again.

### **Communication with Parents**

Please ensure you read the end of week bulletin to keep up to date with any changes we make in response to COVID-19. Please can you ensure if you change your email address or mobile number that you notify us of this.

The measures in place will be reviewed regularly and reflect any changes in Government policy.

I apologise for the length of this letter, but I wanted to ensure that you had all the information you need as a Parent to feel confident in the measures we have taken to reopen the school and look after your sons and daughters. I hope that this letter has been helpful and given you the reassurance that you need.

Staff return to work for two INSET days on the 3 and 4 September where we will be ensuring they are all fully briefed and prepared for the students return. I am very much looking forward to welcoming the students back onsite into boarding on Sunday 6 September and Monday the 7 September for Day students. I have missed the students greatly over the last few months.

Wishing you a wonderful last week of the holidays.

Kind regards

Mrs Helen Cullen  
Headteacher