



KING EDWARD VI SCHOOL LICHFIELD

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Headteacher: Ms J Rutherford BA (Hons)

Dear Parents and Carers,

On behalf of the staff and the governing body, as we approach the end of the summer term, I would like to thank you for your support and understanding over the last few months. Home learning has been a challenge for us all and balancing school, work and home life has taken on a whole new meaning. We have posted an end of term message on the website and on Show My Homework that we would encourage students and parents to watch <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HEqKdj7Vy0E>.

As outlined in my letter last week, our approach to re-opening to all students from September is based on guidance from the Department for Education, adapted to our school and its unique features.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>. Every school is different and our priority is providing a full curriculum in the safest way possible for our school community.

From the Public Health advice to minimise coronavirus (COVID-19) risks, essential measures include:

- A requirement that people who are ill stay at home
- Robust hand and respiratory hygiene
- Enhanced cleaning arrangements
- Active engagement with NHS Test and Trace
- Formal consideration of how to reduce contacts and maximise distancing between those in school
- Whenever possible, minimise potential for contamination as far as it is reasonably practicable.

We will send a reminder of all the current guidance around this before the beginning of the autumn term.

How contacts are reduced will depend on the school's circumstances and will (as much as possible) include:

- Grouping children together
- Avoiding contact between groups
- Arranging classrooms with forward facing desks
- Staff maintaining distance from pupils and other staff as much as possible

All the above, while continuing to provide a full curriculum.

Start of term

You will receive an update in late August confirming arrangements and providing any updates required. Our final risk assessment will also be published on the school website. Staff will be returning to school from 1 September for two training days and then year groups will be starting as follows:

- Year 7 induction from Thursday 3rd September
- Year 12 induction from Friday 4th September from 10:15-14:05 (students new to the school from 9:15)
- Year 8 induction from 8.55 to 11.40 on Monday 7th September then full timetable from Tuesday 8th
- Year 9 induction from 8.55 to 11.35 on Monday 7th September then full timetable from Tuesday 8th
- Year 10 induction from 8.55 to 11.30 on Monday 7th September then full timetable from Tuesday 8th
- Year 11 induction from 8:55 to 11.00 on Monday 7th September then full timetable from Tuesday 8th
- Year 13 induction from 10.30 to 12.30 on Monday 7th September then full timetable from Tuesday 8th

The induction for all year groups will focus on supporting students in their return to school. It is important that they understand the routines and measures put in place with some time to absorb this information before they begin their full timetables. Arrangements for induction including rooming will also be provided separately to year groups before the beginning of term.

From Tuesday 8th September, Years 7,8,12 and 13 will have a different pattern of lessons to Years 9,10 and 11. This will stagger break and lunchtimes as well as transition between lessons but will not change the beginning or end of the school day. One of the successes of opening to Year 10 and 12 has been the use of staggered timings; when the transition times are quieter then keeping your distance is much easier around site. All students will have a sticker to go in their planner that sets out the timings for their year group. These timings will stay in place until further notice.

Students will have access to the full curriculum but there will also be revised routines in many subjects, particularly practical subjects. Staff have been working to revise plans so that we minimise sharing of equipment or that where it is essential we have suitable hygiene routines in place.

Attendance

We are all keen for students to return to school. The Department for Education have been clear that school attendance will be mandatory again from the beginning of the Autumn term, this means from that point, the usual rules on school attendance will apply, including:

- Parents' duty to ensure that their child attends regularly at school where that child is a registered pupil at school and they are of compulsory school age
- Schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow-up absence
- The availability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices in line with the local authorities' codes of conduct.

We recognise that some students may be nervous about coming back in to school. We hope that once students have adjusted to the revised routines and had a sense of normality in school that any concerns will be eased.

We would urge any parent to discuss their concerns with the school before making any decision to keep students at home when they are well enough to attend school. When school is fully open, we will not be in a position to provide home learning for students who choose not to attend.

Enhanced hygiene practices and cleaning

We are all now used to having to clean our hands more often and more thoroughly than usual. This will continue to be essential and there will also be hand sanitiser throughout the school with students cleaning their hands on entry to and exit from lessons. Parents may prefer students to bring their own hand sanitiser and possibly some emollient cream as continued use can have an impact on more sensitive skin. There will also be hand sanitiser available in all the dining areas.

Year groups will be kept apart for lessons and social times with crossover around school minimised by the staggering of lessons and routines for waiting outside buildings rather than in corridors. It is important for students to bring a suitable coat to school as waiting outside buildings and increased ventilation through having windows open etc. may require some protection from the weather or cooler temperatures.

There will be enhanced cleaning on site during the day and in specialist rooms there will sometimes be the need to wipe down shared equipment etc. For example, there will be individual alcohol-based wipes in all ICT rooms for students to wipe down keyboards and mice before use.

PPE (Personal Protection Equipment)

The use of PPE in schools (to include face masks) is not recommended by the DfE and we will uphold this advice by requesting that staff and students not to wear these whilst on the school site. The exception to this would be use linked to providing first aid.

Catering

Each year group will use a separate food point for breaks and lunchtimes. As we now have three locations for food in Johnson, Q Block and Bader this will mean that students will only be able to use their designated area at social times, regardless of whether they are purchasing food. There will also be normal lessons taking place for other year groups at this time so it is essential that students are considerate in the way that they conduct themselves around school. Year groups will rotate to use different food points every two weeks to provide full access to the range of food on offer. We will not be able to provide a pre-school breakfast service as this is non-essential and would mix students across year groups.

Transport

The school continues to work closely with Staffordshire School Transport. We have attached a letter from the transport service for your information. We know that the wearing of face coverings will be mandatory on all public transport, but we will require them to be removed upon arrival at school.

School uniform

In relation to school uniform, the DfE guidance states:

We would encourage all schools to return to their usual uniform policies in the Autumn term. Uniform can play a valuable role in contributing to the ethos of a school and setting an appropriate tone. Uniforms do not need to be cleaned any more often than usual, nor do they need to be cleaned using methods which are different from normal.

We expect that full school uniform will be normal dress from September. However, there are two temporary revisions to our approach. We have made these temporary changes to support both students and staff.

- As of September, students must wear the school blazer OR a school jumper (black, knitted, V-neck jumper - with or without school logo). Students may wear both the blazer and the jumper should they choose to do so.

Full details of our uniform requirements can be found on the website here

http://www.keslichfield.org.uk/?page_id=385. This includes information about our official uniform suppliers and adjustments they have made to ensure the safe provision of uniform including online purchases.

Due to the current circumstances, we have made some temporary changes to our processes in Physical Education. From September, students will be required to wear their PE kit to school on the days that PE is a timetabled lesson. We decided this based upon the close proximity in the changing rooms being identified as a higher-level risk in our subject risk assessment. We have decided upon the following:

- Students can wear their school trousers/skirt/plain navy tracksuit bottoms over the top of their PE kit throughout the day (there will be an opportunity for a quick change in organised smaller groups at the start and end of their PE lesson).
- Students can wear their PE hoody (school branded or plain navy) and/or rain jacket (school branded or plain navy) over the top of their PE top throughout the day.
- Students ensure they have additional kit items/footwear for the practical activity they will be doing in their PE lesson (e.g. they bring boots if required or shin pads etc).
- If a student chooses to wear their school shoes during the day, they will need to bring a separate pair of trainers for PE lessons.

In line with government recommendations, in September, we will have an amended curriculum where core PE lessons will take place outdoors or in a large space where there is opportunity to open doors for a flow of air to come through. As you will appreciate, the weather can be a little unpredictable and we ask students to plan for this accordingly to ensure they are wearing appropriate kit, in line with school policy, to keep warm when the weather conditions are less favourable.

Equipment for school

It will be essential for students to have their own equipment for school as this cannot be loaned or shared. In addition, students will need their usual books, folders or any other equipment or resources for specialist lessons.

All students will need:

- Pens
- Ruler
- Rubber
- Pencils
- Sharpener
- Calculator
- Glue Stick
- Student Planner
- Note Book
- Ear phones for Music & MFL

School calendar and activities

Last week we shared the term dates for the coming year with you. The usual school calendar will also look quite different. If you have looked at the school website recently or followed links sent in messages home then you will have seen the increasing use of school videos and online platforms to share information and celebrate achievements. As we are unable to have large gatherings of adults in school there will be changes to how we interact with parents.

- Parents' information evenings and Open Evening will be replaced by online sharing of information. This may include the use of videos or voice-over presentations.
- Parents' evenings will take place via the same online booking system but will also be carried out online. In the autumn this will be an appointment with the form tutor for all year groups to discuss how students have adjusted following their return to school. Further information will be shared via our calendar extract.
- Presentation evenings, Dedication Day and the Carol Service will not take place as live events this year but we will be looking at other ways to share important celebrations and traditions with students and their families.

We have also taken the decision to postpone the start of face-to-face extra-curricular activities until at least October half-term. This was an extremely difficult decision as we know that this is a thriving part of school life. However, the measures that we are putting in place to support safety cannot be put at risk by further crossover of students or facilities. With staggered timings during the day, staff may not even have the same lunchtimes as a group of students or other staff. Once the term begins, we hope that we will be in a position to review this at the earliest opportunity.

The last few months have tested everyone's flexibility, resilience and resourcefulness. On behalf of the governing body, we would like to thank all our staff, students and parents for their support. School will be closed over the summer to allow the building work to take place with the exception of students coming in to collect their examination results. We wish you a restful summer break, some time to switch off will allow us all to re-engage effectively with the new academic year in September.

Yours sincerely,

Jane Rutherford
Headteacher

Chris Cartwright
Chair of Governors

