

MBA/LGI
24 August 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

Arrangements for September 2020

I hope you are all safe and well.

The prevalence of coronavirus (COVID-19) has decreased since schools and colleges restricted their opening to most students back in March, the NHS Test and Trace system is up and running and we understand more about the measures that need to be in place to create safer environments in schools.

As a result, the Government has asked schools to plan for all children and young people to return from the start of the new academic year **and the positive news is that we will be open in September to ALL students!**

As you would expect, we have spent a great deal of time ensuring that we have followed the Government's guidance about the full reopening of schools which can be found [here](#). Whilst the threat of spreading COVID-19 still exists, we have put in place a number of new arrangements to ensure we further minimise the threat of spreading the virus whilst delivering a full curriculum for our students.

Welcoming all students back

We feel certain that our School is as safe as it can possibly be and we want to welcome back every single one of our students in September, including those with certain medical needs who may have been classified as clinically vulnerable or clinically extremely vulnerable during the lockdown. If you have any queries regarding your child's medical needs and / or if your personal circumstances have changed, please contact your child's form tutor in the first instance. In addition, the Government has provided a useful guide for parents about the re-opening of schools, this can be found [here](#).

Since March not one person, student or staff, has contracted the virus in our School.

Start dates for students

To ensure each and every student has a successful return to school, we are staggering the start to the new academic year. Details are:

Tuesday 1st September: Year 7 students **ONLY**

Wednesday 2nd September: Year 7, Year 8 and Year 11 students **ONLY***

Thursday 3rd September: **ALL** students, including Years 9 and 10.

***For Years 9 and 10, on Wednesday 2nd September the day will run virtually. Form Tutors will be running a tutor session between 8.30 and 8.50 am via Google Meet and then again at 3.30pm. Work will then be set via Google Classroom.**

Working together to manage risk

In order to manage effectively the remaining risk, school will look and feel a bit different in September. Reopening our School in these circumstances, whilst attempting to retain the amazing things which make us such a unique School, as well as continuing to hold students to the very high standards that we rightly demand, will require a monumental effort from everyone. I know that together, as an already incredibly strong community with relentless drive and ambition, we will succeed.

We will be working together to ensure both that our School is a safe place to work and study, and to minimise the risk of spreading the virus so that we can remain open and minimise disruption. Students will have to take much greater responsibility for their conduct than ever before. Parents and carers will also need to play their part, particularly in relation to the NHS Test and Trace process.

Keeping safe is our priority

I am acutely aware that many families will be anxious about their children returning to school in September, but I want to assure you that our priority is keeping staff, students and families as safe as possible while making no excuses and continuing to work towards the very best outcomes and great experiences for our students. I hope this information will help to reassure you.

We have created a new page on our website for quick reference to any documents and useful information related to re-opening, including this letter which includes frequently asked questions (FAQs). Please visit:

<https://www.saxmundhamschool.org.uk/covid-19-september-2020/>

There is a lot to communicate, so I will be brief.

I have bullet-pointed the key headlines below and then given greater detail in the main section of the letter:

- **All students will be back in school in September and online provision will cease;**
- **Students will follow their normal timetable, within their normal classes for each subject but will be based in one classroom. The only exception is for Food Technology, PE and GCSE Art, Music and DT. Some Key Stage 4 Science lessons will be in labs;**
- **We will create year group 'bubbles'; each year group 'bubble' will have its own zone;**
- **Year group 'bubbles' will be kept separate upon entering the school site, throughout the school day, and when leaving the site;**
- **Students will have break with their period 2 class and lunch with their period 4 class;**
- **Specialist Centres will be seen as a class 'bubble' and may, based on student need, be organised in sub-bubbles;**
- **Senior staff, teaching and classroom based staff will be able to move between the year group 'bubbles' – following Health and Safety protocols - so that we can have the right teachers in front of the right classes at the right time. There will be slight changes to the timings of the school day, with an extended break time and extended lunch period with three sittings;**
- **There will be no practical work in Science with Covid-approved activities in Art, Drama, Music and PE;**
- **There will be no extra-curricular activities and clubs, although enrichment will continue in bubbles;**
- **Our Pastoral systems will be structured around year group 'bubbles';**
- **An extended tutor period will take place at the end of the school day to facilitate additional pastoral care and a staggered exit;**
- **Interventions (Lexia; 1:1 tuition) will take place in a separate 'floating' year group classroom which will be cleaned after each session;**
- **The first formal review of this policy will take place w/c 28th September 2020, in addition to the daily and weekly reviews by each school's Senior Leadership Team.**

Through all of this, we will balance academic and wellbeing support.



Providing a balanced return to school for each and every student

- A 15 week on-line tutoring programme for targeted Year 11 students
- Access to the full curriculum from day one
- Testing replaced with 'low stakes progress checks' to help staff identify gaps in students' knowledge and understanding
- Additional tuition and targeted catch-up
- Access to 1:1 tutors
- 'Life after lockdown' pastoral support programme led by each tutor
- Additional support from the pastoral team
- No assessments for the first three weeks. In lessons quizzes will be used to help identify gaps and focus teaching rather than high stakes tests
- Support from the School Nurse
- Enrichment

Academic Support



Wellbeing Support



IMPORTANT

The main symptoms of COVID-19 are:

- a high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your 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 you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual);
- a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal.



How can families help make our school as safe as possible?

- To help us keep the school safe and open, please do not send your child into school if they are feeling ill and especially if they have even just one of the symptoms listed above. If students are poorly and show any of these symptoms, we will contact their parents/carers to come into school to collect them from our COVID-19 isolation room. If in any doubt, please look after your child at home;
- Students who show any of the main symptoms of COVID-19 must be tested for the virus. Details of how to be tested can be found [here](#). School reception will give you a letter if we have to send your child home because they show symptoms. Students who have symptoms will not be allowed back into school until they have tested negative for COVID-19 and school has been able to verify the result of the test, or they have been isolated for the required period of time following a positive test;
- Families must engage with the NHS Test and Trace process so that cases can be identified and action taken - this means if your child develops symptoms, you must arrange for them to get a test and you should inform us immediately of the results of that test. Families must self-isolate if they have been in close contact with someone who develops coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms or someone who tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19);
- Families must remind their children to travel to and from school avoiding contact with others, not mixing between year groups (except for siblings) and to strictly

adhere to social distancing guidelines (considerable effort has gone into timetabling the bubbles to protect students, staff and their families, which will be undermined if students are mixing freely outside school. We request that families, by adhering to Government guidelines, are entirely considerate of this);

- Parents and carers are requested not to come onto the School grounds to drop their child off or for any other reason. We would also ask that parents and carers, where possible, support us by only using the road immediately outside of the School to drop off and collect younger students;
- Students must not linger around school or congregate in groups on their way home;
- Face coverings are required at all times on public transport, **including all school operated buses** (for children over the age of 11). If your child has been wearing a face covering before arriving at school, it will be important that they understand how to remove it safely. Further guidance can be found [here](#). **Face coverings. The Government has asked schools to ensure all face coverings are removed when pupils arrive at school; as such students will not be permitted to wear face coverings in school;**
- Students must wash their hands thoroughly before leaving the house each morning and upon returning at the end of the day. This should be done using soapy warm water and for at least 20 seconds;
- Talk to your child about the need to minimise contact and maintain distance whilst at school.

How will we minimise the risk at school to students, staff and all of their families?

The School risk assessment can be found [here](#). Parents and carers may wish to note the following:

- Student temperatures will be taken as students first arrive at school;
- Increased hygiene and cleaning regimes including students sanitising their hands upon arrival at school, at break and lunch;
- Minimising potential contact between students by keeping students in the same classrooms for different lessons where possible and by reducing the number of times students need to move around the school. (Some students will have to move around the school in order to utilise subject specific classrooms);
- Students will use hand sanitiser provided when entering and exiting classrooms. Where students cannot use hand sanitiser they will be directed to wash hands in the toilets instead;
- Members of the senior leadership team will oversee arrival and student entrance to the site;

- Where possible doors will be kept open and students should not touch any handles or surfaces such as the handrails of the stairs as they make their way to their designated classroom;
- Breakfast and break-time snacks/drinks will be delivered to classrooms;
- Lunch will be staggered so that no more than two-year groups will be eating at the same time and these will be allocated and contained in separate areas of the site. Year 7 will eat lunch as a single bubble;
- Use of the restaurant will be tightly controlled so that year groups do not mix;
- Rooms, equipment and areas that have been used will be cleaned and disinfected at the end of each day;
- We will ensure good respiratory hygiene, by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach at school;
- Classrooms and the restaurant/additional dining space will be reorganised so that students always face forward. There will be no face-to-face seating arrangements;
- Additional cleaning arrangements have been arranged and will include frequently touched surfaces during the working day.

What are the transport arrangements for the start of term?

- Students are encouraged to walk or cycle where possible and avoid public transport. You can refer to the Government's guidance on safe travel, particularly on public transport:
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers>
Parents and carers have been asked to remind their children to travel to and from school avoiding contact with others and to strictly adhere to social distancing guidance;
- Students must not linger around school or congregate in groups on their way home. Face coverings are required at all times on public transport (for children over the age of 11);
- If your child has been wearing a face covering before arriving at school, it will be important that they understand how to remove it safely. Further guidance can be found here: **Face coverings. The Government has asked schools to ensure all face coverings are removed when pupils arrive at school;**
- Senior staff will organise seating plans on each bus route and students will sit in either year group bubbles or with their sibling; face coverings are to be worn at all times;
- **Dedicated school transport** - the School will liaise with the coach companies regarding the guidance to support students travelling to school. However these are not services organised by the School and we will have limited influence about how they will operate.

How will staff manage behaviour?

- In these extraordinary circumstances, we expect our students to behave responsibly and to help us run school safely. We have faith in our young people to step up and help us run school safely and effectively.
- It follows, then, that poor behaviour will not be tolerated. Parental support for our high standards and expectations will be crucial in helping us run school, and I would like to thank you in advance for your help in emphasising to your children how important it is that they play their part in the full reopening of school.

What are the 'key reminders' for students?

READY • RESPECTFUL • SAFE
✓ STAY ALERT!
✓ Follow all school rules and the code of conduct as normal
✓ Do not enter the Teacher's Zone at the front of the classroom
✓ Observe physical distancing by staying apart from students in other year groups as much as possible and NEVER mixing between year groups
✓ Avoid touching hand rails and door handles etc
✓ Make sure you sanitise your hands as directed
✓ Avoid touching your face
✓ If you cough or sneeze, do so in to a tissue which you place immediately in to a pedal bin
✓ Remove your face mask upon arrival at school, place it in a plastic bag and keep in your school bag
✓ Follow instructions at all times to keep everyone safe

A pack of tissues must, at all times, be kept in their blazer pocket. Students are also expected to bring their own water bottle.

What if my child or someone in my child’s bubble falls ill?

- All students will be expected to attend school fully, unless they have tested positive for coronavirus, are waiting for coronavirus test results, or have another reason to self-isolate, including another illness. We will follow our usual procedures for students not attending; however we will be mindful of individual circumstances.
- If a student in your child’s bubble tests positive for coronavirus, you will be notified so that your child can self-isolate.
- If a student is not able to attend, e.g. because they are self-isolating or have a very serious medical condition that prevents them from attending school, the pastoral support team will liaise with home and work will be provided via Google Classroom.
- Parents and carers may wish to avail themselves of this ‘quick reference guide’ for Coronavirus related absences:

What to do if...	Action needed	Return to school when...
...my child has coronavirus symptoms	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do not come to school 2. Contact school daily 3. Self-isolate 4. Get a test 5. Inform school immediately about the test result 	...the test comes back ‘negative’
...my child tests positive for coronavirus	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do not come to school 2. Contact school daily 3. Self-isolate for at least 10 days 4. Inform school immediately about the test result 	...they feel better. They can return to school after 10 days even if they have a cough or loss of smell/taste. These symptoms can last for several weeks once the infection is gone
....somebody else in my household has coronavirus symptoms	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do not come to school 2. Contact school daily 3. Self-isolate 4. Household member to get a test 5. Inform school immediately about the test result 	...the household member’s test come back ‘negative’

...somebody else in my household tests positive for coronavirus	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do not come to school 2. Contact school daily 3. Self-isolate for at least 14 days 	...your child has completed 14 days of isolation
...NHS Test and Trace has identified my child as a 'close contact' of someone with symptoms or confirmed coronavirus	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do not come to school 2. Contact school daily 3. Self-isolate for at least 14 days 	...your child has completed 14 days of isolation
...we/my child has travelled and has to self-isolate as part of a period of quarantine.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do not take unauthorised leave in term time 2. Consider quarantine requirements and advice when booking travel 3. Provide information to school as per the Attendance Policy <p>Returning from a destination where quarantine is needed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do not come to school 2. Contact school daily 3. Self-isolate for 14 days 	...the quarantine period of 14 days has been completed
...we have received medical advice that my child must resume shielding	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do not come to school 2. Contact school as required by the Pastoral Team 3. Shield until your told that restrictions are lifted and shielding is paused again school informs you that restrictions have been lifted and your child can return to school again

How will my child enter and leave the school site and what is the structure of the school day?

- Senior Staff will meet students at the start of each day to ensure they use the correct entrance/exit and the area of the school for their 'bubble'.
- To facilitate the new way of working as well as full access to the curriculum, the school day has been revised as follows:

8.00	8.15	8.50	9.45	10.40	11.10	12.00	12.00	12.50	12.50	12.50	1.40	1.50	1.50	2.40	2.40
8.15	8.50	9.45	10.40	11.10	12.00	12.50	12.50	1.40	1.40	1.40	1.50	2.40	2.40	3.30	3.30
Early	Breakfast Tutor am	L 1	L 2	Break	L 3	L 4 Years 8,9, 10,11	Lunch Year 7	L4 Year 7	L5 Years 10, 11	Lunch 2 Years 8,9	Reg pm	L 5 Years 7,8,9	Lunch 3 Years 10, 11	L6	Tutor pm
Year Group Bubbles	Breakfast Staggered arrival 8.30 am Tutor am Register Literacy, British Values and Current Affairs			Year Group Bubbles Extra break provided for Years 10, 11 with later lunch							Tutor pm Register				Tutor Student support, reflection and well being Staggered departure

- Senior Staff will meet students at the start of each day to ensure they use the correct entrance/exit and the area of the school for their 'bubble'.

Are there any other changes?

- **Toilets and drinking water.** Following the advice of Public Health England, we are focusing some of our increased hygiene practices around toilets, which need, for obvious reasons, to be kept extremely clean. Consequently, we are expecting students to manage the day so that they do not have to go to the toilet during lessons unless it is an absolute emergency. Any students found hanging around in toilets unnecessarily will face disciplinary consequences. Drinking water fountains have been turned off as they are a potential site for spreading the virus. If your child wants to drink water during the school day, he or she must bring their own full drinking bottle with enough water to last for the day.
- **Lockers:** There will be no student lockers available. A simple school bag should contain only the required equipment for that day, including PE kit on the relevant days.
- **Homework:** We will not be setting homework for the first week of the Michaelmas Term. From week 2, homework will be set via Google Classroom. Details to follow.
- **Equipment:** Students should ensure that full range of classroom equipment/stationery is brought to school as students cannot share equipment and staff will not be able to give students spare equipment due to the threat of spreading the virus. Students will spend break and lunch outside unless it is raining, so please make sure your child has a good coat for the winter.
- Due to the need to prevent the mixing of students between year groups we are currently unable to run homework club, or open the library during social time. Trips and sports fixtures will also be suspended. We understand some families will be disappointed by this and we hope to review these decisions later in the term, but the safety of all students is paramount. Enrichment will go ahead in class bubbles.

- Breakfast and break-time snacks/drinks will be delivered to classrooms.

Are there any changes to school uniform?

No. The expectation is that all students will wear uniform as usual. There is no need for additional washing of uniform beyond your normal routine or to change for example, blazers every day.

We are very proud of our students' appearance; it is one of the key features of the School and one of the things which makes our students distinct from other schools. Please ensure your child has all of the correct uniform ready for September. The full uniform list can be found [here](#).

What do I do if I have further questions?

We are aware this is a great deal of information to read. If you have urgent questions, you can email saxmundham@seckfordeducation.org.uk and we will then pass this onto the relevant member of staff.

There will also be an additional Parents' and Carers' Forum, via Zoom, on Friday 11th September between 9.30 and 10.30 am. Further information will follow.

Finally... thank you

I'd like to take the opportunity to thank parents, carers and families for your ongoing support. The past few months in particular have been very difficult. We appreciate everything you have done for your child at home and the love and care you have provided over the past few months.

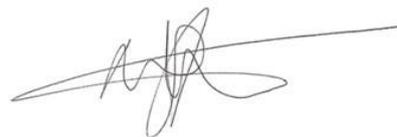
I would also like to thank colleagues, Local Advisory Board members and trustees who have worked hard and supported us over the summer so that we can hit the ground running in September.

Whilst school will feel a little different, the heart of our school has not changed. I feel confident that our students will rise to the considerable challenge and play their part in ensuring a successful full reopening of school.

Yours sincerely



Lizzie Girling
Head of School



Mark Barrow
Chief Operating Officer

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