

6th September 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Update from Highgate Wood School – Return to School

Welcome to the new term at Highgate Wood School! I hope that all of you have had a good summer holiday. It was certainly an unusual one for us given the strange end of term and the preceding months. Nevertheless, we are very excited to be welcoming back all of our students. We have really missed them.

As we have been communicating to you over the last few weeks, for students in years 8 to 13, it will be a return to something that feels quite different from what they left behind in March. For our year 7s this is of course all new, but as an experience of schooling it will also take a while to adjust.

As you can imagine, we have been working incredibly hard over the summer holiday (and before that) to make some changes to our school environment to ensure that it is safe and fully compliant with the expectations stipulated by the Department for Education. We have shared a number of these changes with you in previous communication, but as a reminder, I have summarised the key steps that we are taking in this letter again, but with the addition of a few new things that you will not be aware of.

Start of Term – A Reminder About Monday and Tuesday

We are expecting to see students in years 7, 11 and 13 on Monday 7th September. All other year groups will stay at home.

We will see years 8, 9, 10 and 12 the first time on Tuesday 8th September. All other year groups stay at home (apart from year 7 who will attend both days).

- No curriculum teaching will happen on those two days. They will be familiarisation days where we will take each year group through an induction back to school. We will also use this opportunity to take students through all of the changes that we have put in place for the start of term and outline our expectations and avenues of support. Students will spend the allocated time with their nominated form teacher in their teaching groups (years 7 to 9) and their form tutor in their tutor groups (years 10 to 13)
- Lunch will not be provided on those days so students will need to bring in a packed lunch to eat during the scheduled breaks

Highgate Wood School Student Council supports individual action to address the issues of Climate Change and promotes the United Nations top 10 recommendations.



5-minute showers



Drive less



Lights off



Local produce



Recycle



Meat-free meals



Zero-waste fashion



Unplug



Refill and reuse



Bring your own bag

The arrangements are as below:

Monday 7th September 2020

8:30-8:40 Arrival time Year 7 (Montenotte Rd) Day Ends at 1.00pm	9:30-9.40 Arrival Time Year 13 (Montenotte Rd) Day Ends at 2.00pm	10:30-10:40 Arrival time Year 11 (Montenotte Rd) Day Ends at 3.00pm
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Tuesday 8th September 2020

8:30-8:40 Arrival time Year 7 (Montenotte Rd) Year 8 (Park Road) Day Ends at 1.00pm	9:30-9.40 Arrival Time Year 9 (Park Rd) Year 12 Montenotte Rd Day Ends at 2.00pm	10:30-10:40 Arrival time Year 10 Day Ends at 3.00pm
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Wednesday 9th September

All students in school – normal timetable begins – see later in letter for a reminder of the arrangements for the school day.

What's New? What Haven't We Already Told You?

Since my last communication with you at the end of July we have updated our plans for the start of the term following additional guidance from the government and some discussions with others local schools and the local authority. Below are the key changes for you to be aware of.

Face masks/Face Coverings

- Following the recent announcement by the government allowing schools more discretion, we have taken the decision to make the wearing of face masks/coverings compulsory for all staff and students in social spaces in between lessons. This means that inside the building on corridors and staircases, students and staff will be expected to wear a face mask or a face covering.
- Indoor spaces include the Dining Hall/Canteen other than when students are eating.
- Face masks and coverings will not need to be worn in the playground (except where students are queuing to use the Pod or queuing to enter the Dining Hall).
- There is no requirement for face masks/coverings to be worn in lessons.
- Should individual students or staff choose to wear face masks or coverings at times other than those referred to above, that will be acceptable.
- Face masks and coverings can be any colour and preferably plain in design i.e. no designs or slogans. Disposable surgical face masks are also acceptable. We are issuing separate guidance regarding the safe wearing, removal and re-fitting of face masks.

One Way System Around the School

- We will be using a one way system around the school to ensure that risks to students and staff are minimised as we carefully manage movement around the school. This will include having up staircases and down staircases.

PE for Key Stage 3 – Wearing PE Kit

- Students in year 7, 8 and 9 should come to school in their PE Kits on the days where they have a scheduled PE lesson. They will remain in their PE kits for the day irrespective of what time the lesson occurs. Blazers must be worn over PE kits. The reason that we are doing this is that we do not have adequate changing space for the younger year groups to ensure safe social distancing.

- Students in the older years can come to school in their normal kit and get changed as usual as we have sufficient space to accommodate this safely.

No Visitors On Site

- With the exception of some specific purposes (eg school maintenance, school photography and emergency situations) we will not be allowing any external visitors on site during the current circumstances. This means that all meetings with parents/carers, and other external agencies will be conducted over the phone or via some form of video call (e.g. Zoom conference).

Biometrics/ID

- We will not be using biometric ID (fingerprints) so students will need to use their ID card to purchase food or top up their account. We are encouraging all parents to use Wisepay to top up their child's lunch account.

Books and Bags

- Exercise books will not be stored in the classroom and will only be collected in for marking. Please make sure your child has an adequate school bag to allow them to bring in the books they need for the day. Your child's teachers will let them know if they are carrying on with last year's exercise books.

Medicines and Medical

- It will only be possible to visit the medical room by asking the class teacher who will then arrange for the student to be escorted there. Ordinarily students are expected to carry with them their medicines and inhalers.

Notes for students

- If your child is late, if there is an issue with shoes or uniform items, or if there is anything else that the school should be aware of, please let us know. We will be asking students to provide notes from their parents and carers to explain absence, lateness and uniform infringements. In the absence of a note, it is likely that we will view it as an infringement of school rules.

Discipline and detentions

- As far as possible, we will maintain all our regular expectations of punctuality, behaviour and proper uniform. We do appreciate, however, that there have been a lot of changes and we will therefore have a two week period of grace at the start of term where our usual sanctions, including detentions, are only applied when absolutely necessary. For Year 7 the period of grace will extend to the entire first half term.

A Reminder. Information We Have Previously Shared

1. There will be staggered start times each day by year group and also different entry points

- Years 7, 8 and 9 – 8.25am arrival
 - Year 7 – Montenotte Road
 - Year 8 – Park Road
 - Year 9 – Tennis Courts

- Years 10 and Year 11 – 8.40am arrival
 - Year 10 – Montenotte Road
 - Year 11 – Park Road

Years 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 will be collected from the playground by their subject teachers and walked into building to their designated classrooms

- Year 12 and 13 – 8.55am arrival
 - Year 12 and 13 – Montenotte Road

Years 12 and 13 will go straight to their period 1 lessons

2. The Structure of the school day

The school day will start as above – with different arrival times for different year groups. From arrival, the structure of the day will be as follows:

- **Preparation Time/Reading Time from arrival up to 9am** (this will be 35 minutes for years 7, 8 and 9; 20 minutes for years 10 and 11)
- **Period 1 – 9.00am to 9.55am**
- **Period 2 – 9.55am to 11.35am** – This period of time us made up as follows
 - 1 hour lesson
 - 20 minute break
 - 20 minute Tutorial/PSHE Time

Break time is staggered to keep year groups separate so the order of the three events above is different for different year groups. In some cases we will have to split lessons.

- **Period 3 – 11.35am to 12.30pm**
- **Period 4 – 12.30pm to 2.00pm** – This period of time us made up as follows
 - 1 hour lesson
 - 30 minute lunch

Lunch time is staggered to keep year groups separate so the order of the two events above is different for different year groups. In some cases we will have to split lessons.

- **Period 5 (KS3) – 2.00pm to 2.55pm (years 7, 8 and 9)**
- **Period 5 (KS4 and KS5) – 2.00pm to 3.10pm (years 10, 11, 12 and 13)**
 - The end of the day is staggered to allow us to dismiss each year group separately with years 7, 8 and 9 finishing earlier and leaving via different exits.
 - The same will happen with the older year groups 15 minutes later
 - Every Tuesday afternoon years 10, 11, 12 and 13 will finish their lessons at 2.55pm and then have a 15 minute tutor period with their form tutors

3. Break time and lunch time

- Break times and lunch times will be staggered across the day (as above) to ensure that year groups do not mix.
- Food at break time will be from a limited range (most likely cold foods) and we will serve the same foods from the canteen and the pod.
- Lunch time will serve hot food, but the range of food will be limited. It is likely that we will have to alternate year groups between the canteen servery and the pod on different days.
- Students will have designated areas of the playground to avoid year groups mixing with each other

We are encouraging parents and carers who are able to supply their children with a packed lunch (particularly break time snacks) do so where possible – of course this does not apply to students who are eligible for free school meals.

4. Minimising movement in Year 7, 8 and 9 and impact on the curriculum

- Years 7, 8 and 9 will have their own designated areas where all of their lessons will take place
 - Year 7 – Second floor of the Admin Building
 - Year 8 – Top floor of the Pavilion Building
 - Year 9 – Ground floor of the Admin Building
- Years 7, 8 and 9 will be taught in the same teaching groups throughout their curriculum.
- All practical subjects in Key Stage 3 taught in general classrooms – significant reduction in practical activities.

5. Years 10, 11, 12 and 13 lessons will remain as normal as possible

- All Key Stage 4 and Post 16 groupings will remain unaffected by the protective measures we have put in place – Students will be taught in their English, maths and science sets (KS4) and in their normal chosen subject groups.
- All practical based subjects will be taught in specialist classrooms.
- Year 10, 11, 12 and 13 students will be able to move around the building at lesson changeover, but will be heavily supervised by staff so as to maintain social distancing as much as possible.

6. Clubs and the Learning Resource Centre (first half of the autumn term initially)

- There will not be any before or after school clubs.
- There will not be any peripatetic music tuition (other than what can be done remotely).
- The school will not be able to lend library books.

7. Student Dress Code Expectations

- We expect our students to return to school in full school uniform.
- You will be aware that we are changing the school ties for years 7 to 10 from September to new year group colours. House ties will no longer be in use. Our year 7 ties are ready. For all other year groups, please continue to wear the current house ties until the year group ties are available.
- Year 11s will continue to wear the house colour ties they currently have.
- Face masks and coverings can be any colour but preferably plain with no patterns.

Staying Safe During This Period of Time

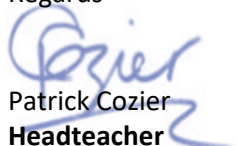
As a school we are doing a wide range of things to ensure that we keep students and staff safe. However, we need you as parents to support us with that as much as possible.

- Obviously if your son or daughter, or somebody else in your household, has coronavirus symptoms they should stay at home until tested and follow the government guidance.
- We request that students avoid going into shops on the way into school and that they walk or cycle to school if they can. If they have to use public transport, they should wear a face covering while travelling which is in line with current government advice.
- We also ask that they observe social distancing at all times on the way to and from school as much as possible.

We will be providing all students with a booklet on their first day back which will provide further details of the new procedures and expectations. We will ask them to bring this booklet home to discuss it with their family and help us all to be safe, informed and aware of how Highgate Wood School is adapting to deal with the current situation.

Finally, thank you again for your continued support during this very unusual period. We hope that this start to the term represents an important move towards normality. In the meantime do stay safe.

Regards



Patrick Cozier
Headteacher