

25 August 2020



Headteacher:
Dr R P Petrie BSc PhD

Dear Parents and Carers

We are very much looking forward to welcoming all of our students back into school in September and would like to take this opportunity to highlight some key information to help you prepare for your child's return to school.

Starting dates:

- 1 September – INSET day – No students will attend and staff will be using this day to ensure everything is in place to safely and smoothly induct students.
- 2 September - Years 7, 11 and the Sixth Form start school.
- 3 September – all students attend.

A vast amount of planning has been ongoing over the summer months to prepare the school for reopening. The safety of our staff and students is, and always will be, our priority and we have ensured adherence to the government guidance for the reopening of schools in our preparations. This has involved both organisational changes to the way we will be operating and some physical changes to the site. These include the installation of additional toilets and outdoor sinks to improve facilities for students on their return.

For detailed information about how we have modified various aspects of school life we encourage you to read our Risk Assessment [here](#), Staff Handbook (which outlines how we will be carrying out many aspects of school life differently in September) [here](#) and an addendum to our Behaviour Policy [here](#). These documents can be found on the school website by following the links. Please can we highlight the following key pieces of information to help you prepare your child for their first day:

Getting to school:

- Wherever possible, students should be encouraged to walk, or cycle, into school.
- The ability to drop off students at school is limited. Please can we ask that, wherever possible, students are dropped off away from the school site to walk for a few minutes into school; this will help significantly in the reduction of cars on site and the roads next to the school. Please remember that there is no access to site to pick up students after school until 15:50. This is to ensure a safer environment as our students leave the site.
- For those students who travel on public or school transport, please remember that a face covering is compulsory for all those who are able to wear them (a few official exemptions apply). For those travelling on dedicated school transport, please read the information provided by Cumbria County Council [here](#)

School uniform:

- Students should attend in full school uniform.
- Students do not need to bring PE kit on their first day and will be informed of what they need to bring for PE lessons in the first few weeks of term. We are planning to get students outside for some fresh air and physical activity during PE lessons. However, a modified PE curriculum will be taught initially.
- Please can you ensure your child comes to school with a waterproof coat each day. Students will be asked to be outside at break and lunchtime unless the weather is very poor.

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Arriving at school:

- When students arrive at school on their first day they will line up outside on the yard (as we do for a fire drill) and will be shown the route they will use to get into their tutor room. Each year group will have a dedicated entrance and area of the school that they will go to as soon as they arrive on site each day.
- Face coverings worn on school transport should be put into a plastic bag. Please ensure that students have a bag with them if necessary.

During the day:

- Students will receive a timetable on their first day. Changes we have made to the school day will be explained to them in more detail. The key change is that we have split both our break and lunchtime to ensure more space and time for students to move through the dining hall. There will initially be no break-time service in the canteen, so students may wish to bring a snack to eat at break.
- We will be placing a lot of emphasis on the importance of hand cleaning. Sanitiser stations have been placed on each entrance to the school building and dining hall, as well as in each classroom. Students will sanitise their hands when they move between rooms and must wash their hands well after using the toilets. Please can we ask that you emphasise the importance of this, and good respiratory hygiene, with your child.
- Much of the first day in school will be spent with form tutors, who will explain the changes and new routines that we will all be following. There will be a lot of new information but we know that students will quickly get used to the new arrangements.
- Students will be following their full timetable of subjects, to maintain the breadth of curriculum. In some cases, particularly in practical subjects and those requiring specialist equipment, the curriculum will be modified where necessary. Some subjects have made changes to the curriculum to fulfil COVID-19 specific guidance, such as not singing in music and no contact sports in PE.

Behaviour:

- We are all having to modify our behaviours at the moment and we have made some important changes, that have been written into a Behaviour Policy Addendum available on the website [here](#)
- Please can you reinforce the following important expectations with your child before they return to school:
 - No one must attend school if they are displaying any symptoms of COVID-19 and everyone must follow the guidelines for testing and isolating, as directed by Public Health England.
 - Students must follow the instructions they are given, including those introduced for the safety of others because of COVID-19.
 - Face coverings must be worn on school and public transport.
 - Students must follow all instructions to regularly clean their hands, and for good respiratory hygiene.
 - Students must stay within their year group bubbles (areas of school and students from their year group only) at all times on the school site.
 - Although students are not required to be 2m away from other students in their bubble, they must not touch other students unnecessarily.
 - Deliberately spitting or coughing at another person will result in exclusion.
 - Although very few students receive detentions, all detentions will now take place after school. This is so that they can be safely managed with students from different year group bubbles.

Lockers/equipment:

- Unfortunately we are unable to provide lockers for students in Years 8, 9, 10 and 11 for the time being, due to the location of lockers and the importance of ensuring students stay in their year group bubbles.
- Please can you encourage your child to bring to school only what they need for each day.
- Staff will be doing everything they can to help reduce the need for students to carry around textbooks etc and students will have only short distances to travel between each lesson.
- Students should bring in a water bottle and can fill them up during the day with our new pedal operated drinks stations.
- Students will be able to leave bags in their form rooms at break and lunchtime but these rooms will not be locked. Valuables should not be brought into school and mobile phones should be switched off and kept out of sight if students are keeping them with them.

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Lunchtime:

- The catering facilities will operate in a slightly different way in September and students will move through the hall in a one way system.
- A slightly more limited range of hot meals will be available initially but there will be an increase in 'grab and go' items such as pasta pots and hot sandwiches.
- Please can we ask that the online payment system is used to top up students' accounts. Reminders and account login details will be reissued where necessary on the first day.

End of the school day:

- Students not on school transport will leave the site at 15:30 and those on school transport will line up on the yards so that we can help control the flow of students to buses as they arrive. In the first few days it will take us slightly longer than usual to help students safely onto their bus. The transport providers have been informed of this.

The information above is not exhaustive but we hope that this provides what you need for the first day of term. Please do look at the additional information available on the website for more details of our planning.

Most of all, we are looking forward to welcoming all students and staff back in September for a return to face-to-face education that we have missed so much.

With best wishes.

Yours sincerely



Dr R P Petrie
Headteacher



Mr R King
Head of School

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