

25th August 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

## **Re: September opening of school to Year 12 students on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> September**

As you are already aware, we have been working hard in school over the holiday to prepare for all year groups returning full-time from the beginning of the autumn term in as safe a way as possible. I would like to encourage you to read all of this information very carefully, including the Q & A section at the end, so that you are fully informed about next steps.

We are now in a position to share our plan with you, which explains how we aim to welcome your child back into school this term whilst minimising the risk to everyone involved. As you may expect, there is a significant amount of information to share with you. To further support this, I will be sharing a pre-recorded webinar to talk through the plan and a link will be sent separately via email on the afternoon of **Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> August**. If, after reading this letter, you have any further questions then please email these to [autumn@southbromsgrove.worcs.sch.uk](mailto:autumn@southbromsgrove.worcs.sch.uk) and I will aim to answer these during the presentation.

The guidance provided by the government to secondary schools underpins the school's approach and can be accessed via this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>

### **Arrangements for the first day – Monday 7<sup>th</sup> September**

Students should arrive at school by 8:40am and line up on the MUGA in their sixth form tutor groups. Tutors will then escort their tutees to their tutor bases. Details of your child's tutor will be emailed to parents by Friday 5<sup>th</sup> September. There will be staff present to direct students to the MUGA should they not know where this is.

**Please note, students must not arrive more than 5 minutes before their start time in order to prevent them mixing in large groups.**

During their first session, all students will receive a briefing from myself and their Head of Year on the health and safety processes they will need to adhere to, to keep themselves and everyone else as safe as possible. This briefing will be based on the **Home School Partnership Agreement** which we have asked parents and students to sign. This Home School Partnership is similar to previous years, though we have made some additions to each of the three sections.

This includes specific Covid-19 safety measures in order to keep students and staff safe and well prepared for the forthcoming year. Please follow this link to read the agreement and to sign to confirm you and your child have read

and agree to the partnership:

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=vw06oUdmdUi2c97IS27kAbITWXsn76dLpZF1GS-Tyi1URFIITIBGTFYxTTZaUklwVzVMSUVVCVU40NS4u>

Inevitably, student timetables are being amended to reflect the revised timings of our school day and individual timetables will be ready for students on their return from the summer break. The timings of the school day for Year 12 is as follows:

#### Entrance: Main School Entrance

Time	
08.40 – 09.00	Registration/PSD
09.00 – 10.00	Period 1
10.00 – 10.30	Break
10.30 – 11.30	Period 2
11.30 – 12.30	Period 3
12.30 – 13.00	Lunch
13.00 – 14.00	Period 4
14.00 – 15.00	Period 5

#### Pastoral support

We are aware that the lockdown has been a difficult time for many of us, including our students. Please let us know if you think your child might need extra support when returning to school, such as if they feel anxious about coming back or they are experiencing grief due to a bereavement. You can get in touch with Mr Coates to do this:

[ca@southbromsgrove.worcs.sch.uk](mailto:ca@southbromsgrove.worcs.sch.uk)

Our current plans to support your child's wellbeing on their return include:

- A tailored PSD 'recovery' plan including a focus on your child's health and mental wellbeing, re-establishing study habits and building their confidence in learning
- Dedicated Student Support Officers to support and mentor your child
- External agencies to assist students with specialist needs

We would also ask that if your child or any members of your household display any suspected Covid-19 symptoms whatsoever, i.e. a new continuous cough, a high temperature, a loss or change to sense of smell or taste, that you contact NHS 111 and keep to the 10/14 day self-isolation procedure that is currently in place (see NHS website for full guidance <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/> and here is a link to arranging a Coronavirus test - <https://www.nhs.uk/ask-for-a-coronavirus-test> ).

As you can imagine we are excited at the prospect of welcoming our students back into school. I want to reassure you all that an immense amount of thought and care has gone into determining how our students return to school, and that the safety of students, staff and their families remains our top priority.

Best wishes and take care



Chris Smith  
Headteacher

## **Questions and answers for parents/carers**

### **Is it safe for my child to return to school?**

We have completed an extensive risk assessment and are putting in place measures to minimise and reduce risk.

The steps we have taken comply with the Government's guidance. Hopefully this list is a useful summary of the steps we are taking:

- A thorough cleaning regime has been implemented which includes, but is not limited to:
  - Highly used areas – door handles/plates, banisters, taps, toilet seats and toilet flushing mechanisms will be cleaned much more regularly.
  - Full daily cleaning of areas occupied by staff/students.
  - Classrooms will be decluttered with only the minimum items permitted on work and other surfaces.
  - Plentiful supply of disinfectant wipes and hand gels in classrooms
- Everyone will be required to sanitise their hands upon arrival at school, the start of break/lunch, starts of lessons, after using the toilet, coughing/sneezing, etc.
- Active engagement with NHS Test and Trace.
- Within South Bromsgrove High's context of the need for specialist subject teaching and students opting for subjects, we are working towards reducing the mixing between different year groups through:
  - staggered start and end times to the day for each year group
  - year groups using different entrances and exits
  - separate breaks and lunches for each year group
  - strict adherence to a one-way system around the school building during the school day to reduce crowding on corridors
- Dining room tables will be cleaned between lunch sittings.
- All adults in school will adhere to strict social distancing guidelines.
- The layouts of classrooms have been adjusted to comply with DfE guidance (e.g. front facing).
- Spaces used will be well ventilated using natural ventilation.

### **Will you be providing my child with equipment to use in school?**

We will not be able to provide equipment such as pens, calculators etc. Your child should arrive fully equipped for school. Students should also not share equipment with each other.

### **Will my child have access to their locker?**

Students will have access to their locker at the beginning at the end of their school day. This will give them the opportunity to store items such as coats on arrival. They will not be able to return to their locker throughout the day.

Therefore, students will need to be self-sufficient throughout the day with books, equipment, drinks and their lunch. This means that they will be able to carry a bag around with them between which is a change to normal expectations.

### **Will my child have access to water in school?**

Your child should bring their own water bottle with them. Obviously, drinks will be available to purchase at break and lunch, but please note, water fountains have been disabled for safety reasons.

### **Is attendance at school compulsory?**

Attendance will be mandatory in September, as the government expects all students to attend school. The usual rules will apply, meaning we will be recording attendance and following up on any absences.

If your child had been staying at home due to the shielding guidance, the government paused this guidance on 1<sup>st</sup> August which means they should be able to come back to school in September. However, if you have received

clinical or public health advice that your child should still remain at home, please let us know, continue to follow that guidance and we will contact you to discuss next steps.

### **Will you be continuing with the normal curriculum?**

Although there will need to be some changes to reflect the teaching time that was lost during the lockdown, we will continue to provide a broad and balanced curriculum. Students will continue with the same number of GCSE, BTEC or A level qualifications. In recognition of the lost teaching time in the second half of last year, the content and assessment of many qualifications has been modified by the exam boards.

Before the summer, we focused on assessing any gaps in students' knowledge that may have come about during lockdown and this process will continue. This will allow us to adapt teaching and put in place additional support where appropriate. In some areas staffing levels have allowed us to put in place additional groups.

### **How we will approach marking and feedback?**

We will do our utmost to ensure that our students still receive high quality feedback from their teachers. As a precaution, the handling of students' work by teaching staff will be limited. Homework will be mostly set online and submitted online. Where homework is completed in exercise books, it will be self-assessed in a subsequent lesson. Classwork and class tests will be self-assessed and not peer assessed to avoid students handling each other's books. Our Feed Forward Assessments and Key Assessments will be completed and marked online, mostly using SACHEL.

### **What extracurricular provision will be running?**

We have suspended extracurricular activities for the first half term but this will be under continuous review.

### **Will my child be able to wear a face masks or visor?**

Children and staff are able to wear face masks or visors in school if they choose to do so. The masks children wear must be plain and no other face coverings, such as scarves, will be permitted.

If you send your child to school with a face mask/visor we will not be able to force them to continue to wear it if they remove it. Please can you also ensure your child knows how to correctly wear a mask and to dispose of it safely. They should also have a plastic bag to store their mask in when it is not in use.

### **What is the situation with the buses?**

We are continuing to liaise with the travel companies and Worcestershire County Council in relation to transport. The most up to date situation is on the school's website and this will be update this page when new information is available: <https://www.southbromsgrove.worcs.sch.uk/page/?title=Transport&pid=55>

### **What should my child wear to school?**

Sixth Form students are required to wear clothes that adhere to the Sixth Form dress code.

### **What are the arrangements for lunch and break times?**

Each year group will have a separate break and lunch sitting, with a full catering service available. This means that only one third of the lower school or half of Sixth Form will be using the facilities at any one time which will reduce the risk of any potential overcrowding.

Students must be seated while indoors and seating will be arranged so that they are all facing the same direction, similar to the set up in classrooms. We will also be encouraging students to go outside. Students should not share drinks or food with other students.

### **Will parents be allowed in school?**

No other people will be allowed in the school building except those identified as school staff. If parents need to speak to a member of staff whilst their child is in school, please contact the office through the normal channels. Parents will only be allowed into school with the permission of the Headteacher.

Telephone: 01527 831 783 Email: [sbhs@southbromsgrove.worcs.sch.uk](mailto:sbhs@southbromsgrove.worcs.sch.uk)

### **What if a child or member of staff who has been at school has symptoms of/or is diagnosed with Covid-19?**

It is extremely important that you do not send your child into school if they have any of the Covid-19 symptoms and that you notify us straightaway. This includes a new, continuous cough, a high temperature or a loss or change to taste and/or smell. If he or she does display symptoms you should get them tested as soon as possible. **Please inform the school immediately if the test result is positive and follow the advice on self-isolation.** If the test result is negative, you must provide the school with evidence of the negative test result before your child can return to school. If your child displays symptoms in school, we will isolate them immediately and contact parents/carers to arrange for them to be sent home. Parents/carers must be able to come to school to collect them within 1 hour.

### **What will happen if a number of children and/or staff are diagnosed with Covid-19?**

Public Health England's local health protection teams will conduct a rapid investigation and will advise the Headteacher on the most appropriate action to take. In some cases a larger number of other children may be asked to self-isolate at home as a precautionary measure. South Bromsgrove High will be observing guidance on infection prevention and control, which reduces the risk of transmission, so we hope that the closure of the whole school will not be necessary

### **What will happen to my child's education in the event of full or partial school closure?**

In the event of a full or partial school lockdown, we have a robust contingency plan for remote learning. We have learned a great deal this year about what makes effective distance learning and our approach is aligned with the DfE's recently updated expectations. In the event of lockdown, we will share the contingency plan with students and parents.