



July 2020

Dear Parent / Carer

### September Update

I am writing to share the school's plans with you for this September. This will be a long letter because I want to share some of the thinking that has underpinned this plan. I am currently working on a briefer newsletter which will sum up all the main points and will be much easier to refer to. This will be sent out in the next few days.

In the week and a half since the guidance was issued, I have liaised with local Hampshire schools, the Local Authority, and read as much as I can to see how others schools have been interpreting this guidance. There are some areas of the guidance which are non-negotiable but the Department of Education has actually given schools a lot of flexibility in how we organise the day. This makes sense - schools have different contexts, staffing, and even vary widely in how they are set out - but it has led to hours of discussions looking at a number of different options.

Four areas of discussion that took some time to resolve:

1. When the guidance first came out, the biggest discussion point was how to organise the students. The guidance for secondary schools is that we should use year group 'bubbles'. In other words, Year 11s can mix freely with other Year 11s (we would never be able to run a timetable if we have to teach in tutor groups because we wouldn't be able to deliver option subjects or set students in Maths). There was some talk among schools that one way to group the students would be to put each year group into different blocks and ask the teachers to move each lesson to the students. The advantage of this would be reducing the opportunity to mix; the downside would be the lack of specialist classrooms which would have a massive impact on practical subjects such as Music, Science, and Design and Technology.
2. A staggered day was also discussed as a means of reducing the number of students coming into school at any one time. We have a lot of students who travel in by train and bus so the general agreement was we would still have students on site but potentially with no lessons to attend if their day was supposed to start later. Similarly, a staggered end to the day will lead to some students missing their bus or train home.
3. We also looked at changing the number of lessons in a day to reduce the number of lesson transitions. One school I spoke to was considering a change to a 3-period day which would have meant no changeovers at all. The downside to this is that the lessons would have been at least an hour and a half long and would have led to a barrowed curriculum.

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4. Finally, we spent a lot of time exploring ways to direct students to different entrances. This would have the clear advantage of reducing the opportunity for students to mix together but the issue for me is that there is no pavement leading to the Satchell Lane entrance (we have been trying to persuade Eastleigh Borough Council to build one for the last 4-5 years). In the end, the risk of directing 400-500 students down Satchell lane is too great.

There is still a lot of detail to be added before September and we will be working over the summer to make sure that the school is safe for students to return. The main points are:

- The school will begin and end as normally (0830-1435 on Monday; 0830-1455 on Tuesday to Friday)
- All students are expected to attend full-time from September. The government has clarified the only exception is if an individual student has been classified as having a critical condition. If you believe your child falls into this category please contact our Attendance Officer as soon as possible.
- Students will enter the school using both entrances (Hamble Lane and Satchell Lane). There will be bins available to dispose of any face masks that have been worn on public transport. Face coverings will need to be packed away safely in a plastic bag.
- If students travel to school by public transport, they will need to wear a face covering. We are currently in discussion with all transport providers and we are awaiting details from them regarding their plans.
- Students should wear full school uniform and the DfE guidance is clear that uniform does not need to be washed more regularly than it would do normally. If students have PE, they should wear their PE kit into school because we have decided at this stage not to use the school changing rooms. I have some meetings booked with companies to demonstrate cleaning products that may allow us to use the changing rooms but until I have seen these products in action, the consensus is that it is safer to avoid changing areas.
- Students will either go to their allocated zone (each year group will have a designated area and we will share this by the end of term) or, if it is after 0815, to their tutor room. They should not walk around the site.
- The school timetable will run as normal, using specialist roomings when appropriate.
- To mitigate the risk of students mixing, we will be instituting a one-way system around the school, including outside the buildings.
- Where possible, we will be using external doors to enter downstairs classrooms, keeping doors and windows open as much as possible to improve ventilation
- All students will be expected to use the provided hand sanitizer on entry and exit to lessons. I would also encourage students to bring in hand sanitizer for personal use during the day.
- Seating plans will be used with much reduced student movement around classrooms - this is to limit the number of areas that will have to be cleaned between lessons.
- Classrooms will be cleaned between lessons by the class teacher
- At break and lunch time, students will socialize only with other students in their year group to avoid mixing. They will remain in their allocated zone, except to buy food.
- I would encourage students to bring in a packed lunch if this is possible (except of course for children eligible for free school meals). We will be running a reduced catering offer which will hopefully operate from 5 food outlets - we are currently working with our catering firm to see if this is possible.
- We are also looking at the possibility of operating a split lunch to reduce the number of children out during this time. I will confirm this before the end of term.

- There are contingency plans in place for any suspected or positive incident of COVID-19. In all cases, the school will liaise with the local health protection team who will provide advice and guidance on the next steps for the school to take. In the event of the school being closed to a year group or a whole-school closure, we have a plan ready to deliver live lessons following the normal school timetable.

This will be a lot for staff and students to get used to. We have staff training next week to enable departments to plan for the new year. We also begin the new academic year with two INSED days in which we will run through all of the above to make sure that we are ready.

Next year, there will be 1103 students attending The Hamble School. Speaking to other local Hampshire schools, most are bringing year groups back individually to make sure that the year begins on a positive start. In line with these schools, we will also be bringing the year groups back in a staged way.

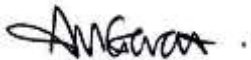
- Monday 07 September: Year 7
- Tuesday 08 September: Years 7 and 8
- Wednesday 09 September: Years 7 and 9
- Thursday 10 September: Years 7 and 11
- Friday 11 September: Years 7, 11 and 10
- Monday 14 September: All year groups back in school

If students are not in school, they will follow a timetable of live lessons and full attendance is expected.

There is a lot to take in and I apologise for the length of this communication but, as you can see, there have been a lot of decisions to make.

There will be further communications before the end of term and I will also be updating the Headteacher blog over the summer holiday as we are expecting further guidance from the Department for Education in August.

Yours faithfully



Mr A Govan  
Headteacher

*If, at any time, you should require special arrangements to be made when visiting the school and/or in order to participate fully in supporting your child at school (e.g. an accessible venue for meetings, if you are a wheelchair user, assistance with translation of documents or enlarged copies of communications etc.), please do not hesitate to let us know.*