



18th August 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

Start of the New Academic Year at Chew Valley School

As promised I am writing to confirm arrangements for the start of term when we welcome back all of our students including those who are joining us for the first time in Year 7. It goes without saying that the period since March has been challenging but let me start by saying once more how proud we are of our students and how they approached this.

We have planned carefully for the start of the year and governors from the school, along with trustees from Lighthouse Schools Partnership (LSP), have needed to sign off our risk assessments to say that they are happy that we are meeting all of the government requirements.

Teaching in Year Group 'Bubbles'

We are really keen to have students back into school, however we need to follow strict government guidelines and year groups are needed to be kept apart. We are therefore basing students in the following areas for lessons with separate outside spaces also being designated for break and lunchtime:

Year 7	English Block
Year 8	Lower School
Year 9	Humanities Block
Year 10	Science
Year 11	Design Technology Area
Sixth Form	Sixth Form and Art

This arrangement will have an impact on various specialised subjects being taught. At GCSE and Post 16 we have modelled our allocation so that students for the most part are able to access the appropriate teaching spaces. However at KS3 this might involve Music being taught in a different classroom rather than in the Music Block for instance. Hand sanitiser will be available for all students in classrooms and one way systems will be in place. As Year 10 students witnessed in June and July, the school out of necessity will have a different feel and our young people will need to respond to this in an appropriate manner.

Start of Term

We are due to have **two Inset Days on Tuesday 1st and Wednesday 2nd September** which will be vital for staff to prepare. It is our intention on **Thursday 3rd September** to have **Year 7, Year 11 and Year 12 in only**, starting at our normal time. This will enable us to run our 'bubbles' for the first time without having 1,200 students on site and also to spend the time with our new students in Year 7 and Year 12 who have not had the benefit of a normal induction along with the new Year 11. **All other students will return on Friday 4th September.** Year 7 are to make their way to the English Block which is at the front of the school. Staff will be available to direct from buses or parents/carers' cars.

All students **MUST** make sure they have the correct pens, pencils, rulers and Mathematics equipment as we are obviously not in a position for these to be shared.

Catering

With the bubble strategy in place, we cannot use our Hall in the normal manner for catering. Year 8 are based in the building which contains the Hall and will be the one year group that can therefore use this space, although it will be a limited offer. The Sixth Form have a catering provision in their block and will only be able to use this facility. We are making temporary provision with our caterers to sell food within other bubbles but again this will predominantly be a limited cold offer. Students will not be able to pay for food using their finger for scanning and this will involve the catering company issuing PIN codes which will happen in school. Students will not be able to top up accounts in school using the cash machines and therefore this will need to be done at home via the internet directly on ParentPay. If students bring packed lunches then these can be eaten in their bubble. Students who are entitled to free school meals will have the appropriate provision available to them.

Timing of the School Day

You may be aware from the news that one of the strategies in place around coronavirus has been a staggering in the start of the school day for different year groups. Whilst that is practical for venues where the majority of students walk to school, our reliance on buses and minibuses has not enabled us to do this. School will continue to start at 8.35am. We had already decided to make a small change for this academic year by extending morning registration/assembly time rather than continuing with two registrations. We are however not going to run registration to start with due to these being arranged in a vertical manner and students will go directly to Period 1. Due to the current situation we have also looked at temporarily shortening lunchtime, and therefore the end of the day, as we are not able to run our normal range of clubs and activities and students will need to remain in their bubbles under the different arrangements.

School day timings during this period of coronavirus:

8.35	First bell
8.40	Period 1
10.10	Period 2
11.10	Break
11.30	Period 3
12.30	Period 4
13.30	Lunch
14.00	Period 5
15.00	Moving bell
15.05	End of school day

School day timings once school returns to 'normal' working:

8.35	First bell
8.40	Registration/assembly
9.10	Period 1
10.10	Period 2
11.10	Break
11.30	Period 3
12.30	Period 4
13.30	Lunch
14.18	Period 5
15.18	Moving bell
15.20	End of school day

School Transport

We have been in contact with BANES and North Somerset who run our entitled services and talked through their risk assessments, along with a number of the providers from South Bristol. All students are requested to sit on transport in years in line with our 'bubbles' at school. This has been arranged in order primarily on how we organise our slight stagger to finishing lessons at the end of the day so that students can access the buses in an orderly fashion. Year 10 will be at the back, followed by Year 9 and Year 8. Year 11 will be next, along with the Sixth Form, with Year 7 sat at the front.

Transport to and from school is very much arranged via the respective local authority or other providers and, apart from meeting them when they arrive and being around when they depart, we are very much in the hands of the drivers and companies involved. The local authorities have instructed us that students are to wear face masks for the duration in line with the government directive on public transport. We would expect students to comply and carry out the instructions of the bus operators in a polite and respectful manner.

We are aware that potentially increasing numbers of families may use their cars and we respectfully ask for people to be mindful of parking, bearing in mind our local community and safety. Our neighbours at Chew Valley Rugby Club have offered the use of their car park for parents and carers with cars. It might well be, particularly with regards to picking up, that families arrange for this to be the place where they meet to avoid congestion. Can we also ask where possible that parents and carers limit the number of adults travelling with the students in line with guidance.

School Uniform

Full school uniform should be worn to school from September apart from the days when PE is taking place and then PE kit should be worn. If we have a period of warm weather then we will formally announce to everyone that jumpers need not be worn. Please rest assured that if, in a classroom, a student requests to the member of staff to remove their jumper once the lesson has begun then the response would always be yes.

New General Arrangements for Accessing the School During the Day

We now have a new school fence which has been part of the work that governors have been carrying out around the safeguarding of our site. We have new electronic gates which will be closed between the hours of 8.50am and 2.45pm. If you wish to access the school during this time you will need to park in the car park closest to the Sports Centre which is outside the new perimeter and then enter via the pedestrian gate near Reception. The entrance closest to Chew Stoke will therefore be two-way during the day and we have made building alterations to facilitate this.

Can I remind everyone that any parent, carer or visitor should always sign in at Reception as a matter of course. It is really important at this time that parents and carers make an appointment if they wish to come into school.

Infection Control

Public Health England (PHE) have clearly stated that at the moment students and staff do not need to wear PPE once in school. There will be occasions where this will change due to individual staff or student circumstances. Students do not have to socially distance from each other, but they must keep their distance from staff. We do ask that students do not touch one another. All members of the community are expected to wash their hands with soap and water more often and for at least 20 seconds. Tissues will be provided in every room and should be used for coughs and sneezes. Students should use these and dispose of them in the lidded bins provided. The school has enhanced cleaning protocols and a janitor service available throughout the day.

General Health and Updating Student Details

It is particularly important that all health records are up-to-date for students and can we ask that you contact us directly if there are details that we should be aware of.

What Will Happen if There is a Case of Coronavirus in School or our Community

Parents and carers are asked to show extreme caution when their children or members of their household are exhibiting symptoms of Covid-19 by self-isolating at home, and by having a test as soon as possible. This can be booked by NHS 111 service, or checking the NHS website. Symptoms are defined as a high temperature, a new continuous cough, or a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste. If this is the case, please alert the school immediately with the reason for absence on our attendance line. The school has to alert Public Health England and the Local Authority of any cases who will then advise us on the correct procedure to stop infection spreading. Once a parent or carer has a test result, with either a positive or negative outcome, they should contact the school again to let us know. If the school contacts you during the day to say that your child is unwell, it is important that you are able to come and collect them at the earliest available opportunity. If we have a confirmed case, we will follow the clear advice of PHE who will direct our decision making.

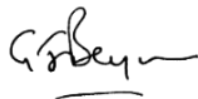
Any Future Lockdown

We are aware that our situation could change at any stage with the potential of revisiting the lockdown scenario once more. If this happens we are set up with Microsoft Teams and a model of lessons that we put in place over the latter part of the last academic year which we would move over to.

In Conclusion

It is important that as a community when students are not at school they continue to follow all of the government guidance on social distancing for the benefit of us all. The coming months are potentially going to be once more unpredictable and it is important that we continue to be responsive to the situation and the needs of the young people that we serve. I know that as parents and carers you will continue to work alongside ourselves which we are highly appreciative of.

With best wishes



Gareth Beynon
Headteacher