



Our Ref: SDN/KON

July 2020

### **ALL Parents/Carers**

Dear Parents/Carers

### **Welcoming Children Back to School - September 2020**

The return to school is now finally in sight and plans are well under way to welcome back all children in all year groups at the start of the autumn term. This letter seeks to reassure parents and carers that as a school we are following government guidelines closely; to prevent spread of the virus, to mitigate risk and to provide each child with a broad and balanced curriculum. As you can appreciate, planning has been complex but I hope you support the school in our attempt to balance risk with the need for us return to our core business; to provide a full range of curriculum subjects and for students to receive specialist teaching whenever possible.

School will be closed over the summer holidays for ALL students. Year 7 ONLY return on Wednesday 2 September 2020 and ALL year groups return on Thursday 3 September 2020.

We acknowledge that no model is ever perfect, however we have decided to take all the following action to minimise the health risks whilst also providing the best possible education. Every school will handle the approach in different ways so we have adopted the best approach for Dormston, however we will regularly review the arrangements and adapt our practice as and when required.

### **Attendance and Punctuality**

From September, it is vital that all children in all year groups attend school every day so as to minimise, as far as possible, the longer-term impact of the pandemic on children's education, well-being and wider development. **School attendance will, therefore be mandatory again from the beginning of the autumn term.** This means that the usual school rules on school attendance will apply including the availability for the local authority to issue fixed-penalty notices. Please note that from August 1<sup>st</sup> shielding advice to all children and adults will be paused (subject to a continued decline in the rates of community transmission) and so our expectation will be that all children return to school (unless they are self-isolating and have had symptoms or a positive test themselves; or because they are a close contact of someone who has COVID-19). Students must come to school on time, and not too soon before their designated arrival time so as to avoid contact with other year groups.

### **Uniform**

Our school website has a full and detailed description of our uniform and it is expected that all students will return in full school uniform in September. Please remember, that trainers or trainer-type shoes will **not** be allowed and winter coats should be black, grey or navy with no logos. In line with government advice with regards to sharing, we will no longer be able to provide your child with a tie should they come to school without one. Should your child arrive at school without the correct uniform, they will be issued with a 48 hour letter during which time the issue will need to be resolved. High standards in uniform form an integral part of our school's Behaviour Policy and will not therefore be

relaxed. Should you have any issues with uniform, please contact your child's Head of House before September via info@dormston.dudley.sch.uk.

## Behaviour Expectations

As you would hope and expect our behaviour expectations will remain the same in September. Disrupting the learning of others will not be tolerated and, in the main, our normal range of sanctions will still apply. If your child breaks the school rules, please expect communication home and should your child deliberately break the zoning rules, they will need to be collected from school. Maintaining the integrity of the teaching zones is essential to the school's ability to follow government guidelines which are in place to prevent an escalation in transmission which may lead to a second wave and further disruption to everyone's learning. Students who deliberately wander around the school will be treated as breaking health and safety rules and will need to be collected from school.

## Social Spaces and Toilets

Similarly, social spaces used for lunch and break times will also be year group only; there will be NO mixing between year groups. Year groups have been allocated their own toilet block (near to their allocated social space) to make washing hands and using the toilet easier with reduced risk of contact with other year groups.

	7	8	9	10	11
8:45 to 9:00	AM		AM		AM
9:00 to 9:15	1	1	1	1	1
9:15 to 9:30	1	1	1	1	1
9:30 to 9:45	1	1	1	1	1
9:45 to 10:00	1	1	1	1	1
10:00 to 10:15	2	2	2	2	2
10:15 to 10:30	2	2	2	2	2
10:30 to 10:45	2	2	2	2	2
10:45 to 11:00	2	2	2	2	2
11:00 to 11:15	Break	3	Break	3	Break
11:15 to 11:30	3	3	3	3	3
11:30 to 11:45	3	Break	3	Break	3
11:45 to 12:00	3	3	3	3	3
12:00 to 12:15	3	3	3	3	3
12:15 to 12:30	4	4	4	4	4
12:30 to 12:45	4	4	4	4	4
12:45 to 13:00	Lunch	4	Lunch	4	Lunch
13:00 to 13:15		4		4	
13:15 to 13:30	4	Lunch	4	Lunch	4
13:30 to 13:45	4		4		4
13:45 to 14:00	5	5	5	5	5
14:00 to 14:15	5	5	5	5	5
14:15 to 14:30	5	5	5	5	5
14:30 to 14:45	5	5	5	5	5
14:45 to 15:00		PM		PM	

### Staggered Lunch and Breaks

In order to accommodate our unusual timetabling and to follow government guidelines, staggered breaks and lunches will be in place from September. Please also note, it has been necessary to reduce the time of the lunch break to 30 minutes.

### Staggered Start and Finish Times/Points of Entry and Exit

In order to reduce mixing between 'bubbles' it has been necessary for us to operate a slightly modified school day as illustrated.

## Arrival & Departure Arrangements

**It is imperative that students arrive and leave from their allocated entrance and exit at the correct time.** This is to prevent the crossover of year groups. Students cannot therefore enter or leave the building from any other entrance/exit. **This may mean that some students are going to have an additional journey time so we advise that you ensure they leave home with adequate time to arrive at school for their allocated arrival time.** If there is a fire alarm normal fire evacuation procedures will apply. Should your child arrive late they will need to sign in using the new side entrance which is next to the Dance Studio.

YEAR GROUP	ENTRANCE/EXIT	ARRIVAL TIME	WHERE TO GO	DISMISSAL
Year 7	Side entrance to field	8.30am - 8.45am	To Form Room	2.45pm
Year 8	Back gate	8.45am - 9.00am	Period 1 Lesson	3.00pm
Year 9	Back gate	8.30am - 8.45am	To Form Room	2.45pm
Year 10	Front entrance	8.45am - 9.00am	Period 1 Lesson	3.00pm
Year 11	Front entrance	8.30am - 8.45am	To Form Room	2.45pm

As in line with Government guidance, children's temperature will not be taken on arrival. Should students choose to wear a mask on public transport this must be safely removed following government advice and kept in their bag before entering the school. If this guidance changes we will let you know.

**As you can see from the table above:**

- **Years 7, 9 and 11** must arrive **between 8.30am - 8.45am** and **go straight to their Form Rooms**. Students must be in their Form Rooms by 8.45am otherwise they will be classed as late. Students will be told on arrival where their allocated Form Room is;
- **Years 8 and 10** must arrive between **8.45am - 9.00am** and **go straight to Period 1**. Students must be in their Form Rooms by 9.00am otherwise they will be classed as late. **Apart from on their first day when they should go to their Form Rooms for Period 1 & Period 2.**

**Break times (please see table on page 5 for break and lunchtime zones):**

- **Years 7, 9 and 11** will have their break time at 11.00am - 11.15am;
- **Years 8 and 10** will have their break at 11.30am - 11.45am.

**Lunch breaks (please see table on page 5 for break and lunchtime zones):**

- **Years 7, 9 and 11** have their lunch break at 12.45pm - 1.15pm (in their allocated zones). This will be half way through Period 4;
- **Years 8 and 10** will have their lunch break at 1.15pm - 1.45pm.

**At the end of the school day:**

- **Years 7, 9 and 11** will end their school day at 2.45pm and should leave through their allocated exit and go straight home;
  - **Year 9** must use the back gate when they arrive and when they leave school;
  - **Year 7** must use the gate leading onto the school's playing field (in between the staff car park and the alley going into Sedgley centre) when they arrive and when they leave school;
  - **Year 11** must use the main entrance when arriving and when leaving the school.
- **Years 8 and 10** will go to their form room at 2.45pm - 3.00pm to allow for the staggered finish of the school day. Students should leave through their allocated exit;
  - **Year 8** must use the back gate when they arrive and leave school;
  - **Year 10** must use the front entrance when they arrive and leave school.

**Staff will be on duty at each of these points of entry/exit and will be ensuring that children sanitise their hands before they go to their first session of the day (whether that be form time or Period 1).**

In order to maximise the health benefits of maintaining the integrity of the year group bubbles, it's imperative that there is no congregating outside the school or on Mill Bank. Please stress the importance of this to your child, and may we also take this opportunity to thank you for not gathering outside the school during drop off or pick up so that pupils are sent a clear reminder of the rules we are all working under at this time. All children, where possible should be encouraged to walk or cycle to school so as to avoid public transport and enjoy the benefits of daily exercise both in the short and long term. Should children use public transport and therefore wear their mask, it's critical that it is removed properly and hygienically before they enter the school grounds. We shall be teaching students how to do

this; however it would be extremely beneficial if you could also do this. Please see the school website for guidance on this.

## Cycling to School

If your child is cycling to school they will need to park their bikes in their allocated zone. We will have spare bike locks should your child not have one. However, we would strongly recommend that you purchase one before September. There will be CCTV coverage of this whole area.

- Year 7 Bike Zone - Field side Astro Fence;
- Year 8 Bike Zone - PLC side Astro Fence;
- Year 9 Bike Zone - PLC side Astro Fence;
- Year 10 Bike Zone - Bike Racks at rear of Staff Room;
- Year 11 Bike Zone - Bike Racks at rear of Staff Room.

There will be signs up to identify these parking zones.

## Mobile Phones

To minimise the handling of equipment, students will NOT be required to hand in mobile phones when they arrive at school. Phones must remain in bags and be turned off. If a mobile phone sounds during any lesson the phone will be confiscated and handed in to Reception in the normal way. There will be small bags in each room so that confiscated phones can be placed inside them before being taken to reception. We cannot take any responsibility for lost, damaged or stolen phones so encourage students to keep their phones safe at all times.

## Outside Agencies & Visitors (including Parents)

Outside agencies and visitors to school (including parents) will be required to be kept to a minimum. **We therefore ask that Parents do not visit the school unless authorisation has been given.** This also means that we are unable to pass on any forgotten pieces of equipment/lunch boxes. It is therefore really important that your child comes to school fully equipped.

## Teaching and Learning Zones

In order to welcome back all children whilst limiting interaction, sharing rooms and social spaces **Years 7, 8 and 9** will be taught in Teaching and Learning zones as per government advice. This means, that although children may move rooms, they will remain in their allocated zone and teachers will move to them. Because consistent groups reduce the risk of transmission, student will remain in their teaching zones with exception of PE and Drama until we receive further government advice; at which point we shall revert to our usual timetabling. As you can appreciate we may need to limit the choice of activities in a certain range of practical subjects given the government guidelines of sharing of resources, these subjects include; Music, Art, Technology and ICT. Teaching and learning will still be of a high quality but it will look a little different. In light of teachers' need to move around the school and teach different year groups, this will mean that the two metre distancing rule will still need to apply to teachers. Learning Support staff will be remaining in year group zones and will not be expected to adhere to the two metre rule due to the particular demands of their role.

## Years 10 and 11

Due to the proximity of their exams, KS4 will not be taught in zones. Their need for specialist equipment means that zoning isn't practicable for these students. Practical lessons will require further planning and we will update you as soon as we are able in this regard. Although the whole of KS4 will constitute a 'bubble', they will not come into contact with any other year group throughout the school day. Could we also ask that parents do not book summer holidays for 2021 as we have as yet received no confirmation of the start and end of the exam season. However, it is likely to be different to what it has been historically and it is therefore feasible that exams could run until the end of July 2021.

Year Group	Teaching Zones	Circulation	Allocated Toilets	Social Spaces (Lunch and break)
7	A Block - downstairs A1 - A7 +A109	Y7 students will access A109 via one set of stairs only to avoid coming into contact with Y9.	A Block toilets	The River Cafe
8	F Block and upstairs in C Block		C Block toilets	The River Cafe
9	A Block - upstairs classrooms	Y9 will access their classrooms via one set of stairs only so as not to come into contact with Y7.	B Block toilets	Marquee – Dining Space 2
10	KS4 lessons will take place, where possible away from the KS3 Zones.		D Block	Marquee Dining Space 2
11			Gallery	The Atrium and the gallery

In order to accommodate all 5 year groups, it has been necessary to purchase a marquee. This shall be situated behind The River Café and fully supervised. The food pods will not be in operation until further notice.

## Marking & Assessment

We recognise that teaching and learning at Dormston (and at schools around the country) is going to look and feel very different in September, and at the moment it's impossible to say for how long the changes we are making will last.

### Marking of books

To keep our school and wider community safe we are asking Dormston staff to quarantine books for 72 hours before they give detailed feedback. This should only be necessary twice per term as per our feedback policy.

### Feedback

We will continue to provide your child with verbal feedback in lesson but are unable at the moment to continue our live marking due to social distancing guidelines. Providing high quality verbal feedback will be a substitute for this. This will also improve our students' oracy, as when they rehearse and answer verbally in detail it improves their written outcomes. We will also continue to model good writing to our students and do shared composition before students write independently.

### Peer and Self-assessment

The fact that "bubbles" in September will be whole cohorts means that we can make effective use of peer and self-assessment. We are aiming to provide students with a mini whiteboard and pen to enable this to happen without sharing books. They can also peer assess each other's verbal responses.

### Knowledge Organisers

Knowledge Organisers are available on the school website and you may wish to use them during the summer holidays to help re-familiarise your child with the key concepts they contain.

### Microsoft Quizzes

Staff will continue to set Microsoft quizzes on Go 4 Schools during term time to check gaps in knowledge and then they will address any misconceptions in subsequent lessons.

## **Use of textbooks**

We are currently looking at ways to minimise use of textbooks whilst still ensuring that our students have all the resources they need to make progress and develop the knowledge they need.

## **Extra-curricular Activities & After School Revision**

Extra-curricular activities will not start until at least after the October half term. Revision for Year 11 will commence in September and further information will follow about this in due course.

## **Prevention and Control Measures**

As the two metre distancing rules have been relaxed, the need for preventive measure becomes even more important. Hand washing is vital. All students on entry to school will need to sanitise their hands, and then again before entering a classroom, before and after eating and after using the toilet. This is essential if we are to continue reducing transmission. Please speak with your child about this before the start of term. Hand sanitiser will be provided in classrooms, soap and hand-drying facilities will also be available in the toilets. Students will also be encouraged to ensure good respiratory hygiene by promoting the '*catch it, bin it, kill it*' approach. Tissues and bins will be available in all classrooms to facilitate this but it would be helpful if children were to come to school with their own hand sanitiser and tissues as a matter of course.

### **Measures within the classroom**

All desks will be forward facing where possible, windows will be open to improve ventilation and each classroom will have hand sanitiser which all students must use on entry and exit of the classroom. There must not be any sharing of equipment at any time; therefore it is essential that your child comes to school fully equipped.

### **Measures elsewhere**

Government guidelines stress that groups should be kept apart and therefore there will be no assemblies in the theatre. Rather, they will be broadcast live into classrooms. Because of the zoning in Key Stage 3, corridors should be much quieter than normal; however the one way system will remain in place to prevent students and staff from crossing in the corridor. Lunch and break times will also be staggered to avoid pinch points which will significantly help to reduce risk of transmission. Please also note that all evening events will be cancelled until further notice and there will be no extra-curricular activities for the first term.

### **Hygiene**

Similar to what has been in place since the start of the pandemic there will be a timetable of enhanced cleaning around the school. Frequently touched surfaces such as doors will be cleaned throughout the day and students will be encouraged to wash their hands thoroughly at key points throughout the school day.

### **Students displaying COVID-19 related symptoms**

Should your child experience any COVID-19 related symptoms during the day, they will be seen by a member of staff who will be wearing PPE. They will be taken to a room while they will wait for collection. Should your child then go on to receive a positive test result, they must stay at home for 7 days. Members of the household (including siblings) should isolate for 14 days.

### **Students and families who are anxious to return to school**

All pupils must return to school; however for a minority of pupils the prospect of returning after such a prolonged absence may be unsettling prospect. There will be support for children who are feeling particularly anxious; it's important that you contact your child's Head of House to let them know of your concerns so that we are better able to provide the extra support they may require via [info@dormston.dudley.sch.uk](mailto:info@dormston.dudley.sch.uk).

### **Students with SEND**

If your child has an EHCP, you will soon be receiving an additional letter which outlines the changes we have been required to make. In-class support will remain in place for children with an EHCP but use of the Learning Support rooms during the day has been significantly limited. If you have any concerns following receipt of the second letter, please don't hesitate to contact our SENCO Mrs Cooper via [info@dormston.dudley.sch.uk](mailto:info@dormston.dudley.sch.uk).

Thank you for your continued support during this unusual time; it is very much appreciated. As we navigate our way through this next term, there may well be changes to what is outlined here and your patience in this regard will be very much appreciated. If and when there are further changes, they will be made in the context of keeping children and staff safe whilst providing them with the education they richly deserve. Whilst we will do all we can to follow government advice, there will always be a place for a common sense approach when making decisions and your support in this is crucial.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "S Dixon". The signature is written in a cursive style with a period at the end.

**Mr S Dixon**  
**Head Teacher**