



10 July 2020

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Dear Parents and Carers

ST JOHN'S MARLBOROUGH – COVID 19

I hope you are all well and as we near the end of what has been an incredible academic year, there is quite a large amount of information to pass on in this week's letter. The news from GOVUK regarding all schools opening for all pupils in September has been warmly received and I sincerely hope that nothing changes that will adversely impact that decision over the next 7 weeks.

Planning for the return at St John's has been based around the guidance issued by GOVUK and they have been approved by Excalibur Academies Trust. The start back for Years 10 and 12 from 15th June has been a tremendous success and all the new systems relating to safety and wellbeing have been adhered to without fail by our students. I am very confident that we are ready for the next phase which will see all the students return in September.

In terms of provision, we have made decisions that ensure all students receive as broad and balanced a curriculum offer as possible and an experience that enables as much catch up time and recovery as we can provide. Safety of both students and staff are paramount and decisions around the curriculum are based on the following principles:

- Teaching will be ambitious and the broad curriculum in all subjects from the start of the autumn term will be in place, making use of existing flexibilities to create time to cover the most important missed content.
- Planning to reopen has been on the basis of the educational needs of all pupils. The unique challenges presented by the size of St John's and the fact that more than half of the student body use buses to arrive and depart have been factored in carefully.
- We will continue to develop remote education so that it is integrated into school curriculum planning. St John's would also be ready should any sort of lockdown be required going forwards.



We will have three 'bubbles' or 'groups' of students operating within the school day and there will be as little cross-over between groups as possible. The recommendations are clear that as long as we mitigate against the groups mixing wherever possible, we will be operating within the spirit of the guidance. In essence and in brief, the operational decisions we have made include:

- All classrooms will be configured to ensure we meet the necessary expectations which will allow us to have whole groups of students in a room together. This will ensure that we offer the complete curriculum to all students. The only exception to the offer to begin with will be PE where we may have to limit some sports because of social distancing and hygiene regulations. On days when your child has PE they should attend school in their St John's PE kit. Blue or black sports kit can be worn if needed but we do not want students turning up in designer sportswear. This decision has been made because we cannot allow students to change in changing rooms safely under the current guidance.
- Cleaning rotas have been increased and expectations around hygiene will remain a very high priority.
- Lunch time will need to be run differently, and the offer may well be temporarily altered to that which was available pre-COVID-19. There will be more sheltered outdoor eating spaces and a new catering pod available to help take pressure off the atrium canteen.
- The one-way system currently in operation will be enforced around the whole school and there will be as much emphasis on social distancing and personal hygiene as possible.
- Teaching staff will be in rooms from 0830 and students will head straight to their period 1 lesson. There will not be any loitering in shared areas as before and the corridors will not be available for communal gatherings for the foreseeable future.
- Designated areas will be assigned to students in certain year groups during social time.
- Where possible we will endeavour to record how children are sat in classrooms so that the track and trace system can be supported should it be needed. We will also reduce the amount of set changes in Key Stage 3 to reduce the amount of cross-over of students.

The School Day

This will look a little different too:

0830 Teachers will be in their classrooms so students will come straight in.

0840 - 0940 **Period 1**

0940 - 1040 **Period 2**

1040 - 1100 Students have Tutorial **or** break (Years 7, 8 and the 6th Form)

1100 - 1120 Students have Tutorial **or** break (Years 9, 10 and 11)

1120 - 1220 **Period 3**

1220 - 1310 Students have Period 4 **or** Lunch 1 (Years 7, 8 and the 6th Form)

1310 - 1400 Students have Period 4 **or** lunch 2 (years 9, 10, 11)

1400 -1500 **Period 5**

Finish at 1500 - Students leave for the buses from sports hall and atrium to reduce contact between groups at the end of the day.

Equipment

Please can I ask that your son/daughter brings the following into school on a daily basis from September:

Black, blue and green pen (biro or fountain pen)

Pair of compasses

Set of coloured pencils (optional)

30 cm transparent ruler

Glue stick

Protractor

Pencils (HB)

Pencil sharpener

Scientific calculator

Rubber

Set of felt tip pens (optional)

Headphones (may be needed for some subjects and will need to be wired, not wireless)

If you are eligible for financial support, we may be able to help you with the acquisition of the equipment listed above so please do get in touch as you would normally.

It is also worth pointing out that **an outdoor coat** will be needed in the event that we should have inclement weather. We will not be able to have children congregating in corridors during social time so having students outside as much as possible will be the expectation.

On the school website, there will be a presentation available soon, outlining what you might see when you return in September.

The Granham Gazette – School Newspaper of the Year

In other news, I am delighted to be able to announce that our very first edition of *'The Granham Gazette'* has won the School Newspaper of the Year Awards, sponsored by First News. This is an amazing accolade which has been achieved during lockdown and I would like to thank Mr Kemp and Mrs Singleton along with their hugely talented news desk team for achieving this. The next edition will be available on the school website soon and it will undoubtedly be striving to meet its usual high standards!

Virtual Wiltshire School Games success

In terms of keeping fit, I am proud to announce that St John's came 5th (out of 250 schools), picking up 23 medals which include 4 golds from the various weekly challenges. All the winners are from years 7 -9 and we are grateful for their efforts ably encouraged by the PE faculty. Apparently 17 of the medals were won by Year 7 alone!

End of Year Farewell

Because we haven't been able to have any end of Year assemblies, we are going to try something very ambitious and invite the whole school, via Teams to an assembly on Friday 17th July at 1030. It won't be long, but it will be a chance to sign off the year and say goodbye. I hope you will be able to log on and attend.

Have a break over the summer...

We are keen for our students and staff to have a break over the summer and so we will not be setting work that we expect students to complete. There are, however, some preparation for GCSE activities set for Year 9 which students will be notified of through Show My Homework. Some may be keen to access these.

With one week of the school term left to go, I am mindful that there is a lot still left to do and I look forward to writing to you again as we break up next Friday. In the meantime, please do continue to stay engaged with us and we appreciate hearing from you through the covid-19@stjohns.excalibur.org.uk email. We also continue to keep up to date our dedicated area on the school website which can be found at:

<https://www.stjohns.excalibur.org.uk/latest-covid-19-information/>.

As ever, I hope that you and your family continue to keep safe.

With kindest regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ian Tucker', written in a cursive style.

Ian Tucker
Principal