

Dear Parents and Carers,

At the end of a busy first week at Woking High School, we want to thank everybody for a successful, full return to school. Our attendance for the first week back was the same as last year, which is outstanding. Despite all of the changes made to routines and locations, students have settled in excellently and I am delighted to say that our return to school has gone extremely well with the vast majority of students returning to their studies with enthusiasm and positivity. I have been so impressed with students' focus on learning and willingness to embrace the procedures in place to keep everyone as safe as possible.

### Reflecting and tweaking

We have all been getting used to the new measures in place to try to minimise risks of COVID-19, in line with Government guidance, reflecting on and tweaking our procedures where necessary to ensure that they are as effective as possible within the limitations we have. I am immensely grateful to our staff, who are working incredibly hard to ensure that plans are implemented, and students are able to learn. Their efforts have been further supported by our sensible and helpful young people, who are behaving extremely well, and the patient and kind support parents and carers have demonstrated as we navigate through these necessary changes.

Having reflected on procedures throughout the week, we have made a few changes and made further recommendations:

- From Monday, Year 11s will leave at 3pm, unless they are staying for P6 (starting week beginning 21<sup>st</sup> September).
- Students who are meeting siblings at the end of the day to travel home together have been allocated a waiting area on the grassed area in front of Reception. Friends are not allowed to join them.
- Year 9s and 10s will enter and exit the school through the bus gates.
- We have informed students to stay on the Woking High School side of the road when walking to and from school, where possible, and to be courteous to other members of the community.
- We have reminded students that if they are picking up siblings from the junior school that they are not allowed on their site and that they would prefer students not to wait with a group of friends, as the space is limited due to their social distancing measures.
- In school, students are in bubbles and our measures seek to minimise interaction between bubbles or to clean areas much more frequently where this is not practicable. As advised before the return to school, students are able to wear masks if they wish and it is recommended that if they or parents/carers are concerned about students' interactions in communal areas, before or after school that students do wear masks.

### Absence from school

It is that time of year when we get colds and other seasonal ailments, and it can be hard to distinguish between the symptoms of common seasonal viruses and COVID-19. We always want to err on the side of caution, but the main symptoms that would require people to self-isolate are:

- a high temperature;
- a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual);
- a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal.

I appreciate that the Government is regularly changing measures and it may therefore be difficult to know what to do if someone has any of the symptoms of COVID-19. With that in mind, we have created a flow diagram to explain the 'What happens if...', which is attached to this email.

To help us to keep our students, staff and families as safe as possible, it is crucial that you let us know if a child is absent due to COVID-19 symptoms or if they have a confirmed case, so that we can ensure that risks are managed as far as possible. Similarly, please be aware that if a student develops any of the symptoms during the day, they and any siblings will be sent home. They will have to be picked up; we cannot allow them to walk home by themselves. Please also keep in mind that the rest of the household will need to self-isolate as soon as one member of the household has developed symptoms and remain in isolation until such a time when a negative test result is received for the person or persons with symptoms. A student (and any siblings) who has been sent home with COVID-19 symptoms will not be able to attend school until they have been tested and received a negative result.

#### Grab-and-Go

Our Grab-and-Go system is running very smoothly; however, it does appear that some students are forgetting to pick up their food order. Please remind your children to pick up their food at the allocated time and place, if you have ordered food for them. The food will not be available at any other time, due to the food delivery times being staggered for different year groups.

#### Information Evenings

We are trying to ensure that some of the events that we would normally be running during the Autumn Term are still going ahead, although in a virtual format, and we finished filming for our Open Event video on Wednesday. This will be sent out to prospective parents/carers in October and will also be available on the website.

Next week, our usual Information Evenings are being replaced by videos to ensure that the events still take place, despite the restrictions on gatherings. Please let us know if you have not received the information regarding these by contacting Ms Mercer via email

[amercer@wokinghigh.surrey.sch.uk](mailto:amercer@wokinghigh.surrey.sch.uk)

Parents' Consultation Evenings will also go ahead this term, but they will be virtual. More information to come.

#### Equipment

As we want to reduce the sharing of equipment within bubbles, we would be grateful if you could ensure that the students carry glue, scissors, mathematical equipment such as calculators and protractors, as well as headphones.

Timetable codes

We have had some queries about what the codes on the students' timetables mean, so I have attached a document that explains the codes. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact your child's teacher.

Finally, I would like to reiterate my thanks to all of you for your support during this strange time and as we continue into this academic year. It has been truly wonderful to see the students back at school smiling and learning.

Kind regards,  
Mrs Walter