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Monday, 13 July 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you are safe and well. The last few months have been very worrying for us all and as lockdown restrictions are being eased I write to share our plans for welcoming pupils back to school in September.

The priority must be and always will be the safety of pupils and staff. I have worked closely with colleagues and the Local Authority to put in place a large number of safety measures at our Secondary site. These measures are recorded in a formal Risk Assessment which has been checked by the Local Authority and agreed by Blanche Nevile's Governing Body. I am confident that school is as safe as it can be with the information available to us at the moment. Over the next few weeks, I will be updating this Risk Assessment in line with the guidance that the Government issued on Thursday 2nd July 2020. We will also be getting our Primary site ready and submitting the Primary Risk Assessment to the Local Authority and the Governing Body in good time for the start of term in September.

In order to reassure you I am sharing the public health advice and in particular the system of controls and protective measures we are required to implement with you:

Prevention:

1. minimise contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does, do not attend school
2. clean hands thoroughly more often than usual
3. ensure good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach
4. introduce enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces often, using standard products such as detergents and bleach
5. minimise contact between individuals and maintain social distancing wherever possible
6. where necessary wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE)

Response to any infection:

1. engage with the NHS Test and Trace process
2. manage confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) amongst the school community
3. contain any outbreak by following local health protection team advice

Our partnership schools, Fortismere and Highgate Primary School have also remained open for the children of key workers and vulnerable children and I am in regular communication with them as we work together towards full reopening in September.



Government guidance makes it clear that all pupils must return to school in September. However, we recognise that many of you will understandably feel anxious about this. **Therefore, I will hold two question and answer sessions by Zoom on Wednesday 15th July 2020 at 10:00 and again at 17:00. If you would like to attend, please contact the school office on 020 8442 2750 to let us have your email address so that we can invite you.** We also recognise that some of our pupils will also have anxieties and teachers are already planning specific opportunities to support pupils. We will be contacting some families to offer an individual risk assessment for pupils with health concerns.

All pupils:

- Wednesday 2nd September 2020 is a staff training day
- Friday 11th September 2020 is a staff training day
- The other staff training days will be set for spring and summer terms with regard to further national or local lockdowns

Primary pupils:

- The school day will begin at 09:15 and finish at 15:00. This is to reduce contact with mainstream pupils, staff and families
- School will finish at 13:00 on Fridays during the first half of the Autumn Term
- All pupils return to school on Thursday 3rd September 2020
- Inclusion lessons will not take place whilst Government Guidance states that pupils must remain in 'bubbles'
- Playtime and Lunchtimes will be shorter and separate from mainstream pupils and lunch will take place in the classrooms
- School transport providers have also put in place safety measures including hand sanitiser and additional cleaning of vehicles

Secondary pupils:

- The school day will begin at 8:40 and finish at 15:10
- Year 7 pupils return to school on Thursday 3rd September 2020
- Year 10 and Year 11 pupils return to school on Friday 4th September 2020
- All other year groups return to school on Monday 7th September 2020
- Inclusion lessons will probably be virtual and delivered using Google Classroom
- Lunch will take place at Blanche Neville and not in Fortismere's dining hall – again this it reduce contact with mainstream pupils and staff
- School transport – in addition to the points above, transport will be offered to students who were independent travellers whilst concerns regarding public transport remain in place

I would like to finish with a personal thank you to my colleagues and the Governing Body for their support and their resilience and commitment to our pupils and their families. We have done our absolute best to support our pupils and our families throughout. I know that after a well-deserved rest and an opportunity to recharge over the holidays we will use the new skills we have learned over the summer term to meet any challenges that come our way during the next school year.

Sending you all my very best wishes, stay safe and stay well and I look forward to welcoming our pupils back to school in September.

Heulwen Rees

Heulwen Rees
Headteacher

