



31st August 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

I hope all our pupils and families have enjoyed a restful summer break. I am very much looking forward to joining Saint Bede's this week and to working with you in the years ahead. Early in the new term I will write to you again to say a little bit more about the coming year. At this point, however, I would like to highlight some important details regarding the start of term to ensure as smooth a beginning as possible for your child.

Return to school arrangements

As you are already aware, the start of term for all pupils is being staggered to facilitate the on-site LFD testing. As a result, your child should return to school as set out below:

Friday 3rd September: **Year 7 only to attend school** for lessons at 8.50am. Pupils will be guided towards the main school yard where they will be met by their Form Tutor.

Monday 6th September: **All years to attend school** for lessons at 8:50am. Pupils should enter the site via the side gate or Mythop Road entrance only. At 8:50am, Year 7 pupils should go directly to their form room. All other pupils should make their way to their Fire Drill areas (Years 8 & 9 - front of the Sports Hall; Years 10 & 11 - Tennis Courts) and line up in forms. Form Tutors will meet their groups and guide them to the appropriate room.

At the end of the school day, pupils in Years 7-10 catching the school buses should line up in front of the Sports Hall before being escorted to the buses. Year 11 pupils should exit via the side gate and make their own way to the buses.

Covid-19 testing

Detailed information regarding testing arrangements was sent to parents/carers last week. Beyond the initial two on-site tests being offered, we encourage all pupils to continue to engage with the twice-weekly home testing. Testing kits will be issued during the first week of term.

Covid-19 routines

As you will be aware, the Department for Education has updated its guidance to schools from 1 September 2021. In particular, the recommendation that pupils be grouped into 'bubbles' has been removed and so we will be returning to our normal arrangements for teaching groups. Pupils will also now move around the school for their lessons.

Face coverings are no longer recommended for use in schools. However, should your child wish to continue to wear a face covering in school they are welcome to do so. Please note that face coverings should **continue to be worn on public transport, including on school buses.**

We will continue to promote good hygiene practices such as regular hand sanitising, ventilation of classrooms and enhanced cleaning. Hand sanitiser will be available in school and pupils may wish to carry their own small bottle for personal use.

Should a pupil develop Covid-19 symptoms, or produce a positive LFD test result, they must remain at home and undertake a PCR test. If the PCR test is positive, the pupil will be required to self-isolate for 10 days. If the PCR test is negative, the pupil should return to school.

If there is a local outbreak, the local authority may ask schools to reintroduce measures such as face coverings. Should this be the case we will advise parents/carers immediately.

Covid-19 contact tracing

In a further change, schools are no longer responsible for contact-tracing in the event of a positive case in the school community. Responsibility for this has been transferred to NHS Test & Trace, as is the case with adults. As a result, schools will not be expected or required to advise pupils that they have been identified as a 'contact' of a confirmed case.

If your child gets a positive PCR test result, NHS Test and Trace will contact you using the details you registered when ordering the PCR test. You and/or your child will be asked a series of specific questions designed to identify who your child has been in close contact with. Being in school with someone who has tested positive for Covid-19 will not necessarily mean a person is identified as a close contact. You will be asked to provide the contact details, if you know them, of any of the individuals – or their parents/carers – who have been identified as close contacts. NHS Test and Trace will then get in touch with these close contacts and provide appropriate instructions and advice. As you may be aware, from 16th August children identified as a contact are no longer required to self-isolate and instead are advised to undertake a precautionary PCR test, as is the case with adults who are fully vaccinated.

Mobile phones

Separately you will receive a letter regarding a change in our policy in respect of mobile phones and other electronic devices. In summary, mobile phones should not be seen or heard during the school day. Breaches of this policy will result in the device being confiscated and, for repeat offenders, a parent/carer will be required to collect the device from school. Please read the contents of this letter carefully and ensure your child is fully aware of these new expectations, which will also be explained to pupils in assembly at the start of term. I thank you in anticipation of your support.

Uniform & Equipment

As part of our return to a 'normal' school routine and curriculum, pupils must attend school in full and complete uniform each day. On their designated PE day, pupils should bring their PE kit and will change into kit for their PE lesson. They will change back into school uniform after their PE lesson. The PE kit list is available here: <https://saintbedes.fireflycloud.net/uniform>. Parents/Carers of pupils joining Year 7 can access this information via their Firefly area.

Please also ensure your child attends school with basic classroom equipment such as pens, pencils, an eraser, a ruler and a glue-stick. This will minimise the need for borrowing or sharing of equipment and ensure a prompt beginning to each lesson.

Catering Arrangements

Our kitchen team are delighted to be able to resume a normal service and offer the full range of hot and cold food and drinks. Both the Dining Hall and the Qube will re-open under the usual arrangements.

Please ensure that your child's ParentPay account is topped up if you wish your child to purchase food or drink in school.

In the interests of hygiene, we will, of course, continue to insist that the water fountains should only be used for filling bottles and must not be drunk from directly.

I look forward to meeting your child in the coming days.

Yours sincerely

Mr P Marsden
Headteacher