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Dear Parents/ Carers

GMS School Arrangements for September 2020

I hope that you and your family have had a restful, enjoyable and safe summer holiday so far. For school leaders it has been demanding and challenging. The recent fiasco of the exam results has kept school staff very busy and, unfortunately, caused numerous parents, carers and students unnecessary anxiety, at the end of what has already been a very exacting second half of the school year.

As I write this letter, the guidance from the government is that all students in all year groups will return to full time schooling in September. As I have communicated previously, Governors and staff are desperate for GMS to open and operational in a far more normal way from the beginning of the new academic year. The guidance for schools does set out what this 'new normal' might look like for educational establishments in September. The 'Systems and Controls' document details the measures that schools must implement, alongside measures that schools must consider as part of their planning to protect students and staff against the virus.

The Government Guidance (please see full document via this [link](#)), states that, 'if schools follow the guidance set out here they will effectively reduce risks in their school and create an inherently safer environment'.

System of Controls

This is the set of actions schools must take or consider. They are grouped into 'Prevention' and 'Response to any infection'.

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 and more often than usual.
- 3) Ensure good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach.
- 4) Introduce enhanced cleaning, including often cleaning frequently touched surfaces, 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).

Numbers 1 to 4 must be in place in all schools, all the time.

Number 5 must be properly considered, and schools must implement measures that suit their particular circumstances.

Number 6 applies in specific circumstances.

Response to any infection:

- 7) Engage with the NHS Test and Trace process.
- 8) Manage confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) amongst the school community.
- 9) Contain any outbreak by following local health protection team advice.

Numbers 7 to 9 must be followed in every case where relevant.

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

The whole school community must follow the guidelines related to having symptoms of coronavirus: including testing positive for the virus, or coming in to contact with someone with the virus, or coming into contact with a suspected case of the virus.

Government: Stay at Home Guidance.

A student who attends school with coronavirus symptoms will need to be collected from school as soon as possible. Students sent home with coronavirus symptoms will not be able to return to school unless they have taken a coronavirus test and received a negative result, or they have spent a minimum of 10 days in self-isolation. It may be that we request evidence of the negative test result. Please see the above link to the 'Stay at Home Guidance' for further details.

2. Clean hands thoroughly more often than usual

All students will be encouraged to wash their hands more regularly. There will be posters in toilets and other key areas across the school with clear guidance. This message will be reinforced by all adults in the school.

All classrooms will have sanitising kit including cleaning tissue, alcohol-based sanitiser, wipes and other appropriate cleaning solutions.

We have installed numerous alcohol-based hand sanitising units, both wall-mounted and free-standing, across the school, students will be encouraged to use these frequently throughout the day.

Additional handwashing stations will also be installed outside.

3. Ensure good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach

We will display posters highlighting good respiratory hygiene across the school and this will be reinforced by all adults in the school.

It is vital that prevention measures 2 and 3 are reinforced in conversations at home; it would assist us and help protect your son/daughter and your family. **It would be extremely helpful if you could provide your child with tissues and their own hand sanitiser, that way they will always have these essential materials with them.**

4. Introduce enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces often, using standard products such as detergents and bleach

We have significantly increased the cleaning schedules in school, to address the risk of transmission of the virus.

All practical lessons will implement a cleaning routine of all shared equipment between use: by different students and by different groups.

5. Minimise contact between individuals and maintain social distancing wherever possible

As stated in the guidance, the overarching principle of this control measure is to reduce the number of contacts between children and children and staff. We are looking to strike a careful balance between managing the risk and avoiding unnecessary stress with overly complicated arrangements; we do not wish to inhibit the school's ability to carry out its main function to educate children.

As highlighted in the guidance, one method of reducing contacts/interactions can be achieved by keeping groups of students separate and maintaining a distance between individuals wherever possible. The guidance states that groupings in secondary schools will need to be year group size, to enable students to receive specialist teaching in the full range of curriculum subjects.

In line with this guidance, as far as is reasonably possible we are planning to keep students within their year groups whilst on the school site. In order to achieve this, we will be staggering the start and finish of the school day and asking different year groups to access the school site via one of two entrances:

- **Year 7 enters via the Bobmore Lane entrance at 8.25am/leaves by the same entrance at 2.50pm.**
- **Year 8 enters via the Wycombe Road entrance at 8.25am/leaves by the same entrance at 2.50pm.**
- **Year 9 enters via the Bobmore Lane entrance at 8.35am/ leaves by the same entrance at 2.55pm.**
- **Year 10 enters via Wycombe Road entrance at 8.35am/ leaves by the same entrance at 3.00pm.**
- **Year 11 enters via Bobmore Lane entrance at 8.40am they must go straight to their form room/ leaves by the same entrance at 3.00pm.**
- **Sixth Form via Wycombe Road entrance at 8.40am; they must go straight to their form room/ leaves by the same entrance at 3.00pm.**

The guidance asks that as many students as possible walk or cycle to/from school and follow physical distance guidelines during their journeys.

All students arriving via Local Authority provided transport will continue to be dropped at the Redgrave Sports Centre Coach Park. For the specific control measures being put in place for the Local Authority provided transport, you will need to contact [Buckinghamshire School Transport](#)

Allocated Areas of the School for Year Groups

All year groups have been allocated a specific area of the school site to reduce contact between students from other year groups before school and at break times. We recognise that it will not always be possible to arrive at the precise times highlighted above, therefore we will be flexible with students having to arrive earlier. Siblings can arrive together and enter through the same entrance, but their dismissal times will be as indicated on page 3. In order to reduce contact and mixing, once on the school site, each student must go directly to the allocated area for their year group, or their form room, if the bell has sounded for the beginning of registration, which is at the revised time of 8.40am.

Classroom Provision

Students will move between classrooms for their lessons, to enable the full delivery of the curriculum by specialist teachers in specialist accommodation. To reduce contact and mixing, there will be a one-way system in operation: entrance, exits and along corridors. In addition, we will implement movement lanes wherever possible in outdoor areas to further reduce contact and mixing. We have also decided to remove the bell signal between lessons to allow a more free-flowing movement and reduce congestion at these times.

In the classroom, all adults will promote good hand and respiratory hygiene. Students and teachers will minimise physical contact and maximise physical distance wherever possible. Posters in classrooms will reinforce these messages.

Where possible, classrooms will be rearranged to facilitate all students sitting in rows facing the front and side by side, unnecessary furniture will be removed to create further space in rooms. Some teachers may choose to teach from the front of their classroom and have an area marked that students will be asked not to enter.

All Local Authority Transport will depart school at 15.05pm.

6. Where necessary, wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE)

In light of the Government directive on the essential wearing of face masks in shops, the decision on whether a student or adult wants to wear a mask in school will be down to the individual. Masks worn in school must be plain and without logos, wording or pictures. Students wearing an inappropriate mask or behaving inappropriately with a mask on will be asked to remove the mask.

Response to any infection:

7) Engage with the NHS Test and Trace process.

8) Manage confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) amongst the school community.

9) Contain any outbreak by following local health protection team advice.

As a school, we will fully engage with the Test and Trace process. We expect all parents/carers, students and their families to do so as well, for the safety of our school and the wider community. As part of this process we will work, if necessary, with our local health protection team.

Please click this [link](#) for the detailed guidance on Test and Trace.

Additional Information

As previously communicated, the start of term dates have been staggered as follows:

Arrangements for Wednesday 2nd September – Friday 4th September 2020

Weds 2 nd September	Year 7 only (Induction Morning)	9.00am-12.00pm
Thurs 3 rd September	Years 7, 8, 9	8.25am/8.35am-15.00pm
	Year 12	8.40am – 11.00am
Fri 4 th September	Years 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and Year 12	8.25/8.35/8.40am-15.00pm
Mon 7th September	All Year Groups (incl. Year 13)	8.25/8.35/8.40am-15.00pm

Please note the staggered start times and please encourage your sons/daughters to use the entrance indicated for their year group on page 3. All students will be met by staff at the entrances and will be guided to their allocated areas and form rooms on their first morning. The tutors of each form class on the first morning will go through all of the new arrangements and give students the opportunity to ask questions.

Full and Correct School Uniform

On return to school, all students are expected to be in full and correct school uniform. We are aware that with the changes to the House System, we will need to change several students' ties in each year group to represent their new house colour. For the time being, please wear last year's tie whilst we organise the replacements necessary.

Toilet Provision

During lesson time students will be told to use the nearest appropriate toilets to the classroom they are being taught in. Before school and during breaks each year group will use the set of toilets nearest to their allocated outside areas. Toilets will be monitored during break times to encourage appropriate physical distancing and hand hygiene.

- The Year 7 allocated toilets will be in S block.
- The Year 8 allocated toilets will be in T block.
- The Year 9 allocated toilets will be in G block.
- The Year 10 allocated toilets will be in B block.
- The Year 11 allocated toilets will be in R block (Redgrave Sports Centre).

Equipment

All students must attend school with all their own equipment: to eliminate the need for sharing or borrowing from each other or teachers.

Please see separate equipment list attached at the end of this letter.

Physical Education

All students are expected to wear full and correct PE kit. Students will change for PE in the changing rooms where the facilities will be managed by the PE Department, to ensure that as much physical distancing as is reasonably possible takes place within the space we have. It may be necessary for some classes to attend school in their PE kit on the days that they have PE, further details on this arrangement will be communicated to the specific classes, students and parents/ Carers when we return to school. No student is required to bring their PE Kit on their first day back in school in September.

Extra-Curricular Activities

Extra-curricular activities will run. We will publish more information in September.

Visitors

Visitors on the school site are by appointment only. The only exception will be for medical or safeguarding emergencies. Parents and carers are included in this protocol: appointments must be arranged and may be scheduled at the close of a school day.

Attendance

School attendance is mandatory from the beginning of the autumn term. The usual rules on school attendance will apply:

- parents'/carers' have a duty to ensure their child attends regularly
- the school has a duty to record daily attendance and follow up on all absentees
- the school will work with the Local Education Authority's attendance team

The government has advised that shielding for all adults and children could pause on August 1st. This means that students on the shielded patients' list with the NHS, or students with parents who were contacted by the NHS and told to shield, can return to school. Parents, carers, or children under the care of specialist health professionals may need to discuss their care with the professional before returning to school. In such circumstances we are willing to discuss individual education plans, but this will only be as a result of specific recommendations by a medical professional.

All families must follow the latest Government guidance with regards to overseas travel, and students must not return to school if they are required to self-isolate. This [link](#) takes you to the latest guidance.

I am looking forward to the full return of all students to GMS in September. I am certain that students are also looking forward to returning, but perhaps not as much as their parents and carers. There will be further communication during the first week of September, firstly to outline our approaches to learning and teaching and how we will integrate information technology; secondly, with updates to the Behaviour Policy. I hope you have a very enjoyable last week or so of this summer break.

Best wishes

Kevin Ford
Headteacher

Essential Equipment for Lessons at Great Marlow School:

- Clear Pencil Case
- Black or Blue Pen
- Green Pen
- Pencil HB
- Ruler (30 Centimetre)
- Eraser
- Protractor
- A Pair of Compasses
- Calculator (Casio FX85GT)
- Glue Stick
- Whiteboard Marker Pen Blue or Black
- 10 Colouring Pencils
- Safety Scissors
- Pencil Sharpener
- Art Zipper Bag
- Assorted Colouring Pencils (set of 12)

Key Stage 3 Only (KS4 students studying art will have a specific equipment list).

- Shading Pencil HB
- Shading Pencil 2B
- Shading Pencil 4B
- Set of Watercolours
- Size 8 Brush
- Fineliner
- A5 Sketchbook.