

14th July 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

I am writing to update you with important information regarding end of term arrangements, start of term arrangements and changes for the next academic year.

1. END OF TERM ARRANGEMENTS

We are continuing to adhere to our **regular timetable until the end of term on Wednesday 21st July**. Given the disruption to learning this academic year, we will be teaching normal lessons each day until the end of term at 3pm (Year7 - 9) or 3;10pm (Years 10 & 12).

2. Department for Education OPERATIONAL GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOLS

On Tuesday 6th July, the government published a 16 page document outlining expectations for schools in September. We will continue to follow the latest government guidance, the headlines of which are as follows:

- we need to learn to live with Covid & reduce ongoing educational disruption
- no bubbles, no staggered starts/finishes, no separate lunches required
- close contacts will be contacted by NHS Test and Trace and advised to take a PCR test
- no face coverings are required in schools
- basic control measures promoted (good hygiene, appropriate cleaning, well ventilated, follow PHE advice - don't come into school if symptomatic)
- regular LFD testing paused over the summer, unless staff/students are in school
- all students are expected to have 2 on-site LFD tests on their return to school
- schools can stagger the first week of term to facilitate this
- twice weekly staff/student LFD tests expected to continue until end of September when the process will be reviewed
- schools need to maintain high quality remote education for next year in the event individuals have to self-isolate

3. START OF TERM ARRANGEMENTS

Following the recent DfE operational guidance to schools regarding September, **we are in the process of finalising arrangements for the start of term. Please note that these arrangements and dates are significantly different to what has previously been stated.** In essence, we will:

- arrange for students have 2 LFD Covid tests onsite before lessons start
- utilise online/blended learning to minimise the loss of learning from Monday 6th September
- provide bespoke induction for Year 7 and Year 12

We will be in touch to confirm specific times and details. However, to give you a flavour of what is to come, we are planning to:

- Test students in the Sports Hall in alphabetical order to make it easier for families to drop off/pick up
- **Have the first student Covid test to be taken on either Thurs 2nd Sept or Fri 3rd September**
- Hand out planners, student timetables & a 'Learning via Teams' reminder when students arrive on those 2 days
- **Expect the second student test to be taken on either Mon 6th Sept or Tue 7th September**
- **Wednesday 8th September becomes in-person induction for Year 7 & 12 only**
- **Thursday 9th September becomes the in-person start of term for the whole school**
- **Online learning commences for Year 8-13 from Monday 6th September.** Students should only miss a few hours of this whilst coming in for their second Covid test. Otherwise, they will learn via Teams, following their individual timetables which they will have received during their COVID test appointment the previous week. This will operate on Monday 6th and Tuesday 7th all day, and Wednesday 8th from Period 3 onwards.
- There will be no initial online learning for Year 7 students, whose academic year effectively starts on Wednesday 8th September
- New starters, including Year 7 and Year 12 will have their first Covid test on Friday a.m. to help with a brief, initial induction. They will be met by Tutors and, after their Covid test, be taken to their tutor rooms, receive planner & timetables, complete biometrics and computer logons and have a brief tour of the building.

4. CHANGES FOR NEXT ACADEMIC YEAR

The increasing popularity of the school and growing number on roll means that we are in the process of building capacity to meet this growing demand. You are aware of the building work, the first phase of which should see our new canteen and kitchen block open in September. However, we are also recruiting additional staff and adjusting some of our structures so that the school will continue to thrive and operate smoothly with increased numbers of students over the next few years.







CHANGES TO THE COLLEGE SYSTEM:

We are adopting a split vertical tutoring model which will have **6 Colleges Leaders**. In the process we are **moving from 4 colleges to 3**. Students who are currently in Globe will be reallocated to either Fortune, Rose or Swan as part of the formation of these new tutor groups. A split vertical model will see **tutor groups of Years 7-9 in Lower School and Years 10-13 in Upper School**. A split vertical system will retain the 'family feel' that is a feature of the school but would allow activities / assemblies / discussion to be more focussed and age appropriate in tutor groups. Y7-9 are about settling in, options and starting GCSE courses whilst Y10-13 are more exam focused. There is still the intention to allow older students to engage with and support the younger ones through a range of planned activities. Whilst we are inserting an additional transition point for students we are also creating an new start / reset opportunity which many will benefit from.

PROGRESS LEADERS STAYING PUT:

Progress Leaders will be fixed to an academic year and not move with the year group as has previously been the case. The PL will have a horizontal overview of the curriculum within the year group along with monitoring the progress the students are making. They will promote curriculum challenge and development. They will become experts in that academic year and develop the specialism associated with the year be that induction, options or exam preparation. They will define what it means to be successful within that year and monitor the progress towards it. This fixed leadership model already successfully exists in the Sixth Form.

So, from September, the structure will look like this:

YEAR	Fortune	Rose	Swan	Progress Leader
UPPER SCHOOL	College Leader: Mrs Arrandale	College Leader: Mrs Attwood	College Leader: Mrs McGuire	
13				Mrs McLeary
12				Mrs McLeary
11				Mr Billingham
10				Mrs O'Neill
LOWER SCHOOL	College Leader: Mrs Collins	College Leader: Mrs Speechley	College Leader: Mrs Gribben	
9				Mr Williams
8				Mr Dionisi
7				Mr Turrell

LOCKERS:

We will be continuing without students lockers next year. This has worked well in ensuring students have the correct equipment with them and reducing the amount of time lost to learning.

UNIFORM:

On days when students have **PE or Dance they must come into school in their PE kit** which they will remain in all day. Please note that students are **not permitted to wear sweatshirts or hoodies**; Students are expected to have the school quarter zip top as part of their PE kit. If they do not, then they will need to wear their blazer over the top of their PE t-shirt.

The school quarter zip top may also double up as a school jumper when wearing regular uniform if an additional layer is required underneath the blazer.

Students in **Years 10-11 will wear the block tie** in their College colours which they will need to acquire before September. These are available from the Uniform Shop in Alcester.

Students in **Years 7-9 will wear the striped tie** in their College colours.

SEND SUPPORT

Our Inclusion Team, which provides support for students with Special Educational Needs, is being renamed 'The Hub'. As the only comprehensive school in town we serve students with a wide range of needs and we want to reflect this in a more inclusive way. Some students require support with technical, academic language (EAL students). Some students have specific needs outlined in an EHCP. Others find it difficult to engage for a variety of reasons including anxiety, mental health concerns and bereavement.

Meanwhile, over the last couple of years, the introduction of the LEAP at KS4 has seen the needs of our most vulnerable learners catered for. We are now looking to ensure appropriate provision is made at KS3 for the handful of learners whose behaviour is a significant barrier to their own learning and the learning of others. These students require specialist intervention to enable them to access mainstream school. This provision will be known as '**The Bridge**'. These programmes of learning will be bespoke to the individual with the aim of reintegrating them fully or partially back into mainstream lessons. Students

may have periods in and out of the Bridge throughout an academic year to keep reinforcing skills and wellbeing support required. Parenting work will form part of this package.

5. SPORTS DAY

Congratulations to everyone involved in a magnificent Sports Day yesterday. It is no mean feat engaging, enthusing and inspiring 1,000+ students all day in competitive sporting activities. Particular thanks to the PE department for making this happen. The results were as follow:

- 1st Swan
- 2nd Rose
- 3rd Globe
- 4th Fortune

I hope that students enjoyed the experience. Some photos and video footage is available on twitter @StraUponAvonSch

6. EUROs FOOTBALL COVERAGE

Whilst most of us were disappointed to see England lose the final on Sunday, it was heartening to see our 'It's Coming Home' image feature in the national news. The i Weekend newspaper devoted ½ page to it;



whilst it also featured in The Sun online and numerous regional newspapers:

[Ministers told to stop saying 'It's Coming Home' because England song 'doesn't go down well overseas' \(thesun.co.uk\)](https://www.thesun.co.uk)

This has been a uniquely challenging and exhausting year. Despite the difficult times, our wider school community should be rightly proud of the resilience and positivity we have all shown throughout the pandemic. As ever, we are grateful for your ongoing support and understanding.

Yours sincerely,

Neil Wallace,
Headteacher