

27 August 2020

Dear Parents and Carers of Year 13 students,

Re-opening of school in September for all students

We are looking forward to welcoming back our Year 13 students into the sixth form and to working with you this coming year.

Risk Assessment Overview

Following the government's published guidance on how to bring all students back to school safely, we have carried out a Risk assessment which has been considered by the whole staff, by the Trade Unions, by the Governors of Ripley and the Trustees of The Bay Learning Trust and it has been checked by an external Health and Safety company. The Risk Assessment [Coronavirus (COVID-19): risk assessment for pupils at school] is available for you to read on the Policies page of our website.

There is significant detail in the risk assessment, the main aspects to highlight are:

- The "groups" will be year groups, each year group will be assigned to a particular area of school and a particular area during study time, breaks and lunchtimes.
- Year 12 and Year 13 students will be in separate bubbles, with The Sixth Form Centre zoned to separate the year groups. Classrooms in the Centre will be designated as either Year 12 or Year 13 rooms. Year 13 students will use the Sixth Form Canteen as their base and the Silent Study Room as their study space. Students will move to main school to specialist rooms as needed.
- Students will be following their normal school timetables and will be taught by the teachers assigned on that timetable.
- Students must attend all timetabled subject lessons, tutorials, designated study time and enrichment activities. Students are allowed to go home after their final timetabled session/ Designated Study Period of the day. Students are also free to leave the site when not in a timetabled session. They will need to wear a mask when in shops and wash hands on return to school.
- Enhanced cleaning routines are in place; the emphasis on handwashing and using sanitisers on entry and exit, alongside the "catch it, bin it, kill it" routine remains high profile.
- Entry and exit to the school will be supervised and managed to avoid mixing; lunch and breaktimes will be staggered to avoid long queues.
- Separate risk assessments are in place for all specialist areas.

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Face Coverings

As you will be aware, the Government has changed its advice on face coverings. In line with the new guidance, students at Ripley will be allowed to wear a reusable plain blue or black face mask when in communal areas if they wish. This is currently optional, but we would like you to be prepared with a blue or black mask in the event of a local lockdown when this will become compulsory.

Face coverings will not be worn in the classroom as this forms part of the year group bubble. If you are worried because your child has a particular medical condition or individual circumstances, please do get in contact with us.

Key Points to Note

- Corridor use will be restricted as much as possible with a one-way system in operation and this will require students at times to walk round the exterior of the building. Please could you ensure that your child has a waterproof coat.
- The end of the day will be slightly staggered to avoid large groups of students mixing. Students who walk home, who get the train or a bus from town, or who are being collected, will be released at 3pm. Students catching the first wave buses will be released at 3.05pm and the remainder, catching second wave buses, will exit at 3.10pm.
- Where possible, young people are encouraged to avoid public transport and come to school on foot or by bicycle. Bike sheds are available for use on the back yard. Students coming on their bike are encouraged to wear a cycle helmet.
- Students travelling on buses – both school buses and service buses – will be required to wear their blue or black face coverings, as mentioned above. **Students who do not have face coverings will not be permitted to travel on the bus, so it is critical they bring one to school.** If a student is not allowed on the bus, we will contact parents and arrangements must then be made to collect your child from school.
- We have been informed that bus companies will not be providing hand sanitiser on the buses, so we recommend that **students bring their own bottles of hand gel** with them each day for use on the bus.
- Students will be required to dress according to the Sixth Form dress code. Normal school rules will apply.
- **Please ensure students have their own basic equipment and file paper.**
- **Parents should only come to school by appointment.** As has been the case over the last year, parents will not be able to drive onto the premises either to drop children off between 8.45 and 9.15am or to pick up children at the end of school.
- Canteen service will be available at lunchtime only. We would encourage students to bring packed lunches. Students are allowed to leave the site at breaktime and lunchtime.

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- **School attendance will be mandatory again from next week.** The only exceptions will be where a student is unable to attend in line with public health advice because they are self-isolating due to having symptoms or a positive test result, because they have returned from holidaying in a country not on the exemptions list, or because they are a close contact of someone who has the virus.
- If you have **recently returned from a holiday abroad**, please check the most up-to-date guidance on quarantine measures. If you have returned from a country which is not listed on the government's 'travel corridor' list, you must self-isolate for 14 days. Please ensure you inform school if this is the case.
- **Please do not send your child into school if he/she is unwell.** If your child has symptoms of Covid-19 (a new, continuous cough, a high temperature, or a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell) you should order a test immediately at www.nhs.uk/coronavirus or call 119 if you have no internet access.
- Throughout the autumn term, we normally have a number of students and teachers who have coughs, colds and high temperatures. Whilst we will be vigilant and will send home children who present with symptoms, parents will not be informed each time a child is sent home with a cough. Please be assured that parents will be informed in the event of a positive test, so that the necessary steps can be taken as regards to self-isolation and testing for those who have been in close contact, in line with guidance from Public Health England.

Work for students who are self-isolating

Over the course of the next academic year, it is possible that there will be instances when students are unable to attend school if they are required to self-isolate as outlined above. Whilst we hope that such instances are low, we need to be prepared so that students do not fall behind in their education.

From September, teachers will be uploading lesson resources such as PowerPoints, and associated tasks onto Firefly for each lesson. This will allow students who are not able to attend school to keep engaged with their learning and prevent them from falling behind. **It will be the responsibility of the student to check Firefly and catch up the work missed.** Teachers will not be setting the catch-up work as a formal task on Firefly as they have done during lockdown. Students will be able to contact teachers to ask questions or submit work using school email. It is an expectation that students complete the work missed whilst they are self-isolating. Exceptions will obviously be made when students are unwell themselves.

Please note, this online work will not be a replacement home education alternative. As stated above, all students are expected to return to school in September.

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First Day Back

The first day in school for students in Year 13 is **Thursday 3rd September**. We will make sure we keep in regular contact with you over the coming weeks and will certainly update you if there are any changes in the government guidance.

There will undoubtedly be anxieties for some about coming back to school. Whilst no one is able to provide a totally risk-free environment, the measures we have taken will ensure that our school is as safe as possible for our return next week. We are confident that our young people will also feel reassured once they are back in their new routines.

We look forward welcoming your son/daughter back in September.

Yours faithfully,

Malcolm Sim
Head of Sixth Form

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