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15th July 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

Re: End of 2019-2020 Academic Year and September Return (0173-19NLI)

I hope this letter finds you safe and well. As this highly unusual school year draws to a close, I felt it important that I write to you to explain our plans for September and in doing so, answer some of the most common questions that parents / carers may have about the start of the new school year.

You will be aware that on Thursday 2nd July, the government set out its intent and plan for all children to return to school full time from the start of September. Since that time, we have carefully studied the government guidance and we are now in a position to share an overview of how we will manage this return safely. Our approach is based on a dual strategy of limiting contact between pupils from different year groups and the continued implementation of hygiene measures. Specific details of these plans relating to the various year groups will be circulated in the last two weeks of the summer holidays, before the September start and please look out for specific SEN and welfare related guidance and support.

Year Group Bubbles

All year groups will be maintained in their own year group bubble and not allowed to mix with other year groups. They will be taught primarily in their 'bubble' rooms for the bulk of their lessons to minimise the need to move around the school. The use of bubbles will reduce the number of pupils sharing the same classroom and the number of pupils circulating at lesson changeover. This will also help Year 11 pupils to maximise their remaining time with us, as the time spent moving around the school will be significantly reduced. Staff will move classrooms and go to the pupils unless a specialist subject area room is required, for example Art, DT, Music, digital Literacy, PE or Dance.

Year 7 Transition

By keeping pupils in a reduced number of rooms for an initial period of time, it will help reduce the anxiety associated with Year 7's familiarising themselves with a new environment. Additionally, due to Year 7 pupils missing out on their 'normal' transition, on their first day in school all Year 7 pupils will receive an hour with their Head of Year to be trained up on the 'Longfield Way' to ease any anxiety or answer any questions that they may have. Please see our school website page for more information on transition.

Pupil Movement Around School

On the rare occasions when moving around the school is unavoidable, it is important that everyone keeps to the left-hand side. The occasions and duration of when different year groups pass each other whilst in school has been greatly reduced because of the measures explained above.



Year Group Social Spaces and Break Time

To ensure year group 'bubbles' are maintained during the school day, especially at social times, outdoor and indoor areas will be clearly defined for use by particular year groups. Year groups will head to these areas immediately upon arrival to school.

Lunch Time

To avoid year groups mixing in the lunch queues and dining areas there will be a staggered start to the lunch time. After each particular year group has been served, they will move to their respective year base allowing time for the cleaning of dining tables where used. The lunch selection will be highly reduced and will take more of a 'packed lunch' style in the form of a grab bag, although some 'hot' options remain.

Hygiene

As has been the case since lock down commenced, all pupils and staff are constantly reminded to wash or sanitise their hands frequently. Cleaning arrangements have been increased, particularly where there are common touch-points, for example handles and bannisters.

Start Dates

Please note, that in order to safely welcome nearly 900 pupils back into school in September we have decided to phase the return of year groups.

- Year 11 and Year 7 will return to school on Wednesday 2nd September
- Year 10, Year 9 and Year 8 will return to school on Thursday 3rd September

Year 10, Year 9 and Year 8 will access their lessons remotely on Wednesday 2nd September via Teams. As mentioned, further details with explicit information relating to each individual year group will be shared in the last two weeks of the summer holidays. I can assure you that these arrangements will only be in place whilst the virus is still prevalent in the community. As soon as the government is confident that the prevalence of the virus has diminished sufficiently and that year group 'bubbles' are not required, we will review our position and consider whether it is safe to revert back to our original timetable.

This 'blended' learning approach is one which you may well have seen enjoying widespread discussion on a national level. One of the biggest positive developments of the unexpected events of the past few months has been the acceleration of the uses of digital platforms for 'education' and Longfield will remain at the cutting edge of contemporary developments in this area in 2020-2021 and beyond.

Summer Packs

All subject summer packs have been emailed out to all pupils and sent home to pupils on the work pack list.

Uniform

We will remain in Summer Uniform (polo shirts) until at least November 2020. At this stage, we must prepare for a return in full summer school uniform in September 2020 and we advise all parents / carers to prepare as early as possible for this, as there may be a backlog due to retail establishments only just becoming operational once more.

There is a uniform guide of how to order from Elizabeth's Embroidery on our website: <https://swiftacademies.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Elizabeth-Embroidery-Info.pdf>

Planning to Support our Return to School

Please encourage pupils to complete the short questionnaire which was emailed to them last week, this will help to ensure our planning for support on return is targeted and meets their needs.

During the week commencing 17th August we will send a parent / carer questionnaire to check on developments during lockdown and over the summer, again this will help to plan for a smooth return to school.

The SEN team feel that the return to school may be especially challenging for some pupils with specific needs. We are working to provide a resource document in response to this to help prepare the pupils for the changes in the organisation of school and the structure of the day, as well as to remind them of some familiar practices that they enjoyed before lockdown began. This will be distributed to pupils that we feel may find this particularly useful. However, if you specifically feel that your child requires this please contact Miss J Morton, SENCo by emailing jmorton@longfield.swiftacademies.org.uk

School Website

Can I please once again signpost you to the Longfield Academy website. All of the above information, as well as the previous letters we have sent home during the school closure are uploaded to our website. I would also like to highlight the SWIFT Coronavirus section; it is an amalgamation of Department for Education, Public Health and various mental health, welfare and educational resources and ideas - as a 'one stop shop' for all things related to COVID education and family welfare: <https://swiftacademies.org.uk/covid19/>

As always, if you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact the school via enquiries@longfield.swiftacademies.org.uk or telephone Reception on 01325 380 815. Reception will remain operational until Friday 24th July 2020 at which time it will close for three weeks, reopening on Monday 17th August 2020.

Thank you for your continued support during this difficult time.

#WeAreLongfield

Yours faithfully,



Mr N Lindsay
Head of School