



15/7/20

Dear Parents/Carers

I wanted to take this opportunity to write to you to address the return to school for all students in September.

All of the staff here at Shire Oak Academy are thoroughly looking forward to welcoming all students back onsite, full time, in September. We hope it will provide them with some sense of normality and routine, whilst also allowing them to have face to face learning, socialise with peers in their year-group bubble and access a restricted extracurricular offering.

The Senior Leadership Team, in conjunction with the Trust, has been closely monitoring and reading government guidance as it comes out. We are meeting regularly to discuss how the return to school will be managed in light of government guidance and which measures we will take to keep the Shire Oak community as safe as possible.

In this letter I will be sharing with you our expectations for all students when they return to school in September. I will also be sharing how the new school day will be approached.

These can be summarised into the following categories:

1. Our Shire Oak Bubbles
2. Uniform
3. Equipment
4. Health and Safety
5. Illness
6. Travel to and from School
7. Format of the School Day
8. PE
9. In conclusion

1. Our Shire Oak Bubbles

As per the government guidance, we will be operating a 'bubble' system. Each year group will be a 'bubble'. This means certain areas of the school will be restricted to each 'bubble' to help stop mixing between bubbles.

These bubbles are organised as below:

Year group	Zone location
Year 7	Upstairs Mercia
Year 8	Science block
Year 9	Upstairs South
Year 10	Downstairs South
Year 11	North Building
Sixth Form	Downstairs Mercia/KJ/Hub

There will still be some movement across the school to ensure some students can access specialist teaching rooms and PE lessons will continue to take place. These rooms/changing rooms will be subject to extra specific cleaning procedures.

We will still be encouraging social distancing within bubbles, where possible.

Within our bubbles groups will be organised as follows:

Year group	Setting arrangements
Year 7	Year 7s will initially be taught in form groups for the first few weeks before being organised into sets based on what will be their English sets
Year 8	Setting will be common across all subjects (except creative arts and PE). These sets will be based on the English sets.
Year 9	Setting will be common across all subjects (except creative arts and PE). These sets will be based on the English sets.
Year 10	Groups & settings will operate as normal with students moving between rooms in their zone. Some specialist lessons may make use of alternative rooms outside of their zone.
Year 11	Groups & settings will operate as normal with students moving between rooms in their zone.
Sixth Form	Groups will operate as normal

2. Uniform

Full uniform should be worn as normal and PE kit brought on days with PE on students timetables.

3. Equipment

To help minimise contact between students, they will not be able to borrow equipment (pens, pencils etc) when they come into school. We will be providing paper, textbooks and exercise books.

We require all students to bring the following into school every day:

- Pencil
- Biro/pen – plus a spare – blue or black
- A different coloured pen e.g. red, green
- Glue sticks
- Ruler
- Calculator
- Highlighter
- Pencil crayons
- Ear phones (with a mini jack for use with computer- for listening exercises in Music and Languages)
- Rubber
- Protractor
- Compass (for drawing circles)
- Hand gel with 70%+ alcohol content
- Tissues

If there are any problems please contact your head of year.

4. Health & Safety

'Catch it, Kill it, Bin it' – we strongly advise that your child has tissues with them at all times. However, tissues and hand gel will also be provided in each classroom.

We will minimise the amount of travel around the school. In KS3 many of the lessons still take place in the same room so the students will remain in one classroom, while teachers move between classrooms.

If your son or daughter moves from one classroom to another, there will be anti-bacterial spray and hand sanitiser in each classroom. He or she will be able to clean his workspace on arrival. Furthermore, where there is movement this will typically be in the 'zone' for the student's year group bubble.

In addition to the intensive cleaning daily; school will also be periodically cleaned during the school day to further keep the site as safe as possible.

5. Illness

If your son or daughter or a family member living with you is ill with Covid symptoms (new continuous cough, or high temperature, or has a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell), your child must stay at home. You must ensure you book a Covid 19 test for your son, daughter or family member. Please under no circumstances send them into school.

The latest government guidance on testing, symptoms and public health advice can be found here:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

If your son/daughter becomes ill whilst in school and exhibits Covid symptoms he/she will be isolated and you will be called to collect him/her. The isolation area will be in the South Building by the first aid room. This will ensure ill children can be separated from the rest of the school community.

6. Travel to and from school

I must stress the point, that for the safety of the whole of the Shire Oak community, there will be a staggered time of arrival for each year group, and no one should be onsite before 8.30am. Year groups will also be allocated different entry points to the school, either the St Marks Road or Lichfield Road entrance. Where possible students should arrive no more than 5 minutes before the allocated start of their day (see below)

When students arrive onsite, they must proceed directly to their lesson 1 room. If students do arrive early they should proceed to their allocated waiting zone on the school site.

I understand this change in arrival and entry point might cause disruption to the usual school morning routine. Please find below in Section 7 the designated arrival time for each year group. These have been introduced to prevent the mixing of bubbles before school and arrival to school, but can only work with your and your child's support.

Similarly, departure from school will and must be prompt. All students are to leave the site as soon as their onsite lesson or extra curricular activity finishes. Again, your co-operation on this matter is essential.

The Government advises that public transport use is minimised where possible.

- If your son or daughter travels by public transport he/she must wear a face mask. On entry to the school this face mask should be put away in a plastic bag or disposed of to minimise infection.
- Entry and exit to the school will be staggered but this will not change the teacher contact time between students and their teachers.

Find the latest government guidance on public transport here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers>

7. Format of the School Day

a. Planned timings for the school day

To enable a staggered start and finish, as mentioned, we are planning to have different year groups arriving at staggered times via different gates. This will help to minimise contact between bubbles.

Notable changes to 'normal' school day timings.:

- Period 1 will vary in length depending on year group. 1.15hr for some, 1hr and 45 minutes.
- Period 5 will balance the day with variable length lessons again. 55 minutes, 1.05hr and 1.15hr.
- Total curriculum time will remain at at least 5 hours a day for all years (7-11).
- Form time will move between periods 1 & 2.
- Staggered break times
- Specific lunchtime locations for bubbles, these will vary either daily or weekly.

	Year 11	Sixth Form	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 7				
Entrance	Lichfield	St Marks	St Marks	Lichfield	Lichfield	St Marks				
8.40	1	1	1	1	1	1	8.40			
8.55							8.55			
9.10							9.10			
9.55	FORM	FORM	FORM	FORM	FORM	FORM				
10.15	2	2	2	2	2	2				
11.15							BREAK	BREAK	3	3
	3	3	BREAK	BREAK	3	3				
			BREAK	BREAK					11.25-11.35	
			BREAK	BREAK			3	3		11.35-11.45
12.25	LUNCH (HALL)	LUNCH (LOAKAL)	4	4	4	4	12.25-12.55			
	4	4	LUNCH (HALL)	LUNCH (RGS)				12.55-1.25		
			5	5	4	4	LUNCH (RGS)	LUNCH (HALL)	1.25-1.55	
1.55					5	5	5	5		
2.50										
3.00										
3.10										
TWILIGHT/ MEETINGS		TWILIGHT								

b. Food at break and lunchtime

- Until further notice there will be no food service at break times.
- Groups will rotate weekly between having lunch service in the main hall and Rick Gamble Studio/Hub

c. Staggered arrival

Year group	Start time	Entry point
Year 7	9.10am	St Marks Road entrance
Year 8	8.55am	St Marks Road entrance
Year 9	8.55am	Lichfield Road entrance
Year 10	9.10am	Lichfield Road entrance
Year 11	8.40am	Lichfield Road entrance
Sixth Form	8.40am	St Marks Road entrance

- Students should be in their allocated room for period 1 by this time. For the first day of term these will be emailed to students later in August.

8. PE/Games

PE lessons will take place. We want to allow students the opportunity to enjoy exercise as part of their education to promote physical and mental wellbeing. However, to make sport as safe as possible only non-contact fitness activities will take place.

9. In conclusion

I appreciate that the above guidance is lengthy and specific. However, I wanted to be able to clearly set out expectations and some of the plans we have in place for September to ensure there is a clarity of communication between you, our students and our staff at Shire Oak Academy. I will also be publishing a summary of our risk assessment later today on the website.

Thank you for your support during this unprecedented time of school closure. Your messages of support for the school has helped encourage the staff and senior team during these difficult times.

I sincerely hope that we will be able to make a safe return to school in September. However, should we sadly be ordered to close, we can resume with remote learning via google classroom, which has proven to be an excellent online platform.

I want to reassure you that, as always, the safety of our Shire Oak community remains at the forefront of our thoughts. I hope you and your family keep safe and well over summer, and we all very much look forward to seeing all our students back at school in September.

Yours sincerely



Mr N. Critchley
Vice Principal/Acting Head of School