

Covid-19 update 6/7/20 - Reopening in September / Prize-Giving

Dear Parents

I hope you are all well.

Reopening of site to all pupils in September

I am writing following publication last week of Government guidance for the full reopening of schools in September. I am pleased to confirm that, in accordance with this guidance, it seems highly likely that we will be able to welcome back all children from the first day of term, Wednesday 2nd September – although as ever the caveat remains that national and local progress against coronavirus could change all planning abruptly.

Although we expect that every child will be able to return, and on a full-time basis, there will be several adaptations made to normal school life. Some of those are likely to be:

- Continued requirement for ill children to stay at home
- Regular hand-washing
- Staggered start, break and end times
- Frequent cleaning of rooms and resources
- One-way systems around school and other measures to limit cross-contamination
- Groups of pupils prevented from mixing with others, including by way of allocated play areas
- Non-contact sport only in PE
- No whole-school assemblies
- Adjustments to classroom layouts, including forward facing desks
- Staff maintaining distance from pupils and other staff as much as possible
- Impact on after-school clubs, wraparound care and school transport
- Potential need for groups of pupils to self-isolate in the event of a confirmed case

Despite some of these preventative measures remaining in place, the guidance from the Department for Education does encourage the resumption of a number of normal parts of school life which have temporarily been on hold – children should be able to return in their full uniform, for example, school trips can go ahead, if they do not involve overnight stays, and – in news that I am personally particularly excited about – the school kitchen should be able to reopen for lunches, albeit with some moderations to its operation.

The DfE directive is that schools should teach an ambitious and broad curriculum in all subjects from the start of the autumn term, but make use of existing flexibilities to create time to cover the most important missed content. It is certainly our intention at Gad's Hill to remain true to the full breadth of our curriculum and no subjects will be dropped from the timetable that we are constructing. However, curriculum planning is well underway to ensure that any gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills are addressed early on. As I have written in previous correspondence, I believe that our already-robust tracking systems and the level of personal support and individualised planning will ensure that my teaching colleagues are excellently placed to deliver any necessary interventions without delaying the progress of pupils who have made some excellent strides forward this term.

There are many specific measures that will need to be implemented in order to plan all of the above, and work is now starting on a rewrite of the school's coronavirus risk assessment in order to reflect this. I will share this with all parents during the summer holiday once it is ready, and we will seek to communicate any changes which are likely to impact your own planning (eg. transport, wraparound care etc.) with as much notice as possible.

Prize-Giving Services

I mentioned in my last email that we intend to proceed with virtual prize-giving services for the Juniors and Seniors, and I can confirm that these will be broadcast for you to watch at the same times as the services would have been held:

- Junior Prize-Giving: Thursday 9th July, 6pm
- Senior Prize-Giving: Friday 10th July, 7pm

Kindergarten pupils, as Mrs Grant has already shared with parents, will be able to see their children collect prizes at pick-up times through this week.

Prize recipients in the Junior and Senior Schools will collect their prizes at the start of the Autumn Term, although prize-winners in Remove will be able to bring their awards home on Friday 10th July. For parents of Junior children who just can't wait that long, we will be offering an opportunity to collect their child's prize from the car park between 1pm and 2pm on Friday 10th July.

Details of how to watch the ceremony will be shared later this week.

Kind regards
Paul Savage