

From the Principal

21st July 2021

Dear Parents/ Carers,

Plans for the start of term – September 2021

As we reach the end of this summer term, we look forward to a few weeks where we can re-charge after a further extraordinary year for the School, our families, and our communities. It is also timely that I relay some details to you as we keep September on the horizon.

The School day 2021/22

The current School year has necessitated many changes to our daily operations and provision, to meet various Covid-secure control measures. From September 2021 we are putting in place plans to work in a different way - for example by removing staggered arrivals and start times. School communities will still require Covid-19 caution as we navigate the autumn term – but many of the restrictions of this year have at this time been removed.

I am grateful to parents and carers who responded to the School's request for views about proposed changes for September. We have collated a frequently asked questions (FAQs) summary document around the responses – which is provided separate to this letter.

From September 2021 the School day will start at 8.50am for all pupils and students – with access to the site from 8.40am – and in some cases earlier if there are planned interventions in place and arranged for your child. We shall maintain a system of line-up at 8.50am for every year group – for a range of reasons, including hand hygiene practice upon entry to the building.

Whilst we plan some restrictions on movement around the building, our curriculum model from September returns to subject specific teaching in specialist rooms to the greatest extent possible, so that learning can be more fully supported by the broad range of resources available within School.

As has been the case this year, pupils and students will have a 30 minute lunch period in 2021/22.

For information, our September model is detailed below:

Session	Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Line up	8.50-9.00	Line up	Line up	Line up	Line up	Line up
Period 1	9.00-10.00					
Period 2	10.00-11.00					
Break	11.00-11.15	In zones	In zones	In zones	In zones	In zones
Period 3	11.15-12.15					
Period 4	12.15-1.15					Lunch/ Reading
Lunch	1.15-2.15	Lunch/ Notices	Lunch/ Reading	Lunch/ Reading	Lunch/ Reading	Enrichment
Period 5	2.15-3.15	L4L with tutors				
Period 6	3.15-4.10/4.20*	Staff Development				Dept. Meetings

Health and safety from September: Covid-19

From September, the current advice is that School's no longer need many of the precautions or restrictions that have been in place across 2020/21. For example, planning for year group bubbles is not necessary, and Schools will not be expected to undertake contact tracing or identify close contacts for self-isolation – with people now being identified instead by NHS Test and Trace.

Work places, including Schools, have always been required to plan for a safe environment which promotes well-being, and from September that will not change. Across the summer break, Governors and I shall review and adapt our risk assessment so that we are clear that proportionate and sensible measures such as good hygiene, additional cleaning, and ventilation remain in place. People who have Covid-19 symptoms should not attend School, arrange a test, and await the outcome.

Schools are also being encouraged to consider outbreak management plans within risk assessments for and from September, in case there is a need to respond to a localised increase in Covid-19 at any point. I shall confirm expectations from September in this regard, but in that eventuality it is likely to include the temporary use of face coverings on site – and in which case I would ask that you continue to provide your child with access to and use of a plain face covering as a part of their School kit. We shall also consider circumstances where it might be necessary for us to revert to remote learning – much as we would very much hope for occasions to be rare and only for the least amount of time to contain and manage an outbreak.

The start of the School term: Monday 6th, Tuesday 7th, and Wednesday 8th September 2021

We look forward to welcoming our new pupils, students, and families to the School from September – largely those who will be entering year 7 and year 12 – alongside current School members.

As a part of the planning for the return after the summer holiday, Schools are being asked to put in place a rota of onsite lateral flow testing for pupils and students – similar to that which we implemented in March of this year when returning from the January and February national lockdown.

This will require that we change the previously published start dates for some year groups, with new arrangements as detailed below:

- Monday 6th September:** [Year 7 pupils and Year 12 students, only](#)
Arrive for an 8.50am start – and remaining onsite all day
During the day we shall undertake induction and lateral flow testing
- Tuesday 7th September:** [Year 11 pupils and Year 13 students](#)
Arrive for an 8.50am start – and remaining onsite all day
Including lateral flow testing during the day
- [Year 7 pupils and Year 12 students](#)
Arrive for an 11.00am start– remaining on site for the rest of the day
- [Years 8, 9, and 10 pupils](#) – not in School on this day
- Wednesday 8th September:** [Years 8, 9, and 10 pupils](#)
Arrive for an 8.50am start – and remaining onsite all day
Including lateral flow testing during the day
- [Years 7 and 11 pupils, and Years 12 and 13 students](#)
Arrive for an 11.00am start- remaining on site for the rest of the day
- Thursday 9th September:** [Whole School start – at 8.50am](#)
Normal timetable – with the second round of LFTs starting today.

Lateral flow tests for Covid-19 are helpful in identifying people who are positive for coronavirus, but also asymptomatic (not showing symptoms). Whilst tests will not be compulsory for School attendance, they are encouraged. If you are one of our new Year 7 families we are aware that your child is unlikely to have undertaken a lateral flow test, and our trained team of testing and School staff will guide your child through the testing process if you consent for them to undertake testing.

Lateral flow testing will require the provision of data protection and data sharing permissions. If you are one of our families having provided this previously (for the March 2021 testing) then you do not need to re-submit your permission. Links and forms to provide permissions, including if you are new to the School in September, will be circulated separate to this letter.

The summer holiday period: August 2021

Teachers and leaders at the School have determined evidence-based teacher assessed grades for our GCSE pupils and A level students this year, in line with national guidance and expectations. These were submitted to the Awarding Organisations in June.

Our pupils in year 11 and their families will have received information about GCSE results day (Thursday 12th August) from Mr Stow, and our students in year 13 and their families similarly from Mr Dwyer about A level results day (Tuesday 10th August) – separate to this letter. I applaud each young person for their fortitude across two years of study with an unprecedented back-drop. I sincerely hope that each pupil and student receiving grades in August is able to embark on a successful next step in study, training, or work – and we shall continue to provide support and guidance to that aim.

We also plan to welcome some members of our Year 11 pupils-in-waiting (this year's Year 10) to School for various dates in August for episodes of learning recovery in a range of subjects – and many Year 7 pupils-in-waiting (our new September intake) for a week of learning, enrichment, and activities to support induction, across the week of 23rd August. Thank you to parents and carers who have signed up to this – and separate information has been and will be distributed by the members of staff leading for summer School plans.

Staying safe over the summer period – and policy updates

As we enter the holiday period, away from the routines and contact at School, please find details attached presented in collaboration with our partners from West Midlands Police. I ask that you reinforce the helpful guidance which is referenced so that our children may stay safe and well across the summer.

I also take this opportunity to signpost you to a couple of policy changes around safety and well-being, recently approved by Governors. All policies set by the Governing Board are routinely reviewed, and we have this year taken the opportunity to strengthen our position within our Behaviour policy on searching and screening for prohibited items [at section 18, page7]:

<https://uobschool.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/UoBS-Behaviour-and-Exclusions-Policy-2021.pdf>

Additionally, Schools have been required this year to review their Relationships and Sex Education policy – including increased attention for education about positive, healthy, respectful relationships:

<https://uobschool.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/UoBS-Relationships-Sex-Education-Policy-2021.pdf>

School senior leadership team – from September 2021

With our School now in its second five-year planning cycle, 2020-25, in consultation with Governors and leaders at the School I have taken the opportunity to re-shape the senior leadership team effective 1st September. With the aims of distributing leadership, building capacity, and providing career development opportunities, I am pleased to inform you of the senior team composition below – and in particular to welcome David Ashmore, Sarah Barrington, and Kelly Poulton:

David Ashmore	Assistant Vice Principal (Teaching and Early Career Teachers)
Sarah Barrington	Assistant Vice Principal (Teaching and Teacher Development)
Liam Dwyer	Assistant Vice Principal (Sixth Form)
Robin Haslam	School Business Leader
Kelly Poulton	Associate Senior Leader (SENDCo)
Arthur Reeves	Assistant Vice Principal (Teaching and Assessment)
Mark Stow	Vice Principal (Education)
Rebecca Tigue	Director of University Training School and Character Education
Colin Townsend	Principal
Gemma Walker	Vice Principal (Pupils)

Rebecca Tigue will be taking on a new role within the re-shaped team, in part focused on further strengthening School opportunities with the University and wider partners; and Gemma Walker has been appointed as Vice Principal – leading on safeguarding, pastoral care, and pupil behaviour. I wish both Rebecca and Gemma every success as they take on these respective leadership portfolios.

Final information

In readiness for the new term I take this opportunity to attach a reminder of the School's uniform requirements and dress code, and our equipment list (which here at the School we refer to as PREPP). Thank you in advance for ensuring that your child is fully prepared in these respects for the start of the new School year in September.

We are in the process of finalising our summer term newsletter celebrating some of the wider aspects of School life and achievement – and we shall circulate that to you over coming weeks.

I am especially grateful for your parental support and partnership as we continue to navigate the changing obstacles presented by the pandemic and I enclose my warm wishes for your family's well-being.

To those members and friends of our School community presently celebrating – Eid Mubarak.

Yours truly,



Colin Townsend
Principal