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Head Teacher: Neil Oxley

Oaklands School

"The best for all, the best from all"

6th July 2021

Dear Parent/Carers

I hope you and your family are well.

I am writing to you to provide you with some information about the remainder of this year, and for the planning taking place for September.

As of the time of writing this letter, schools have not been provided with any definitive information as to how they will need to operate in September regarding Covid-19 and how it will affect the Autumn Term. I have received no direction about whether the school will be able to open fully or if we will need to provide a curriculum in a Covid safe environment in year group bubbles as we have this year.

I am sure that you will be aware from the information presented in the media, that the government is hoping that there will be an easing of lockdown measures in July and that life can return to some normality. Although the government has indicated that life will be returning to normal in their press releases, this does not mean that schools will automatically revert to full opening and that measures such as working in bubbles/year groups, or contact tracing will cease.

To support both the well-being of students and through consultation with staff, the decision has been made for students to be taught in year group bubbles again for the start of the Autumn term in September. This will allow us to appropriately support the students with their transition up to their next year group when it will be possible to do so, and to allow staff time and notice to plan an appropriate and engaging curriculum. This decision has been made due to there only being two weeks left of this year, and due to time constraints, we need time to prepare. It is worth noting that all of next year's year 8 pupils do not know what it is like at Oaklands with no restrictions, and of course the new year 7s don't either as they haven't been able to experience any transition events. Additionally, next year's year 9 pupils have only had one full term at Oaklands without any restrictions. Therefore it will be important to support the pupils in September, and when we know that schools can operate without restrictions, as was the case before Covid-19, we must help alleviate any anxieties that pupils have and gradually support them to understand the changes, both within the curriculum and during unstructured times (e.g. breaks and lunchtime).

The bubble system starting in September will be changed slightly from how it has been this year. As part of our catch-up plan we will be focusing more on pupil progress relevant to their learning pathways, and to enable this to happen effectively we will be changing the form group structure meaning that pupils will be in new allocated form groups for next year. This is a necessary change to support learning and progress and we will be informing the pupils next week and supporting them through the change.

When we start back in September, we will review the situation and if the process is that the school can fully open as it did before Covid-19 restrictions, then we will choose the most appropriate way to do this within the first four weeks. Again, this will allow for appropriate planning to be put in place and for pupils to be supported in managing the change. We will of course inform you of any changes should this happen, including how this will affect the curriculum (e.g. awareness of exam pathways and the implementation of key stage four options lessons).

You may also be aware from coverage within the media that at the start of the Autumn term, secondary schools may need to implement on-site testing centres, to complete LFD tests for pupils as they return following the summer holidays. This would be very similar to the process that happened in schools when they fully opened in March following the national lockdown. If this were to be the case, then it would affect the start dates for year groups as described in the table below,

Year groups	Start date
Year 7 and 12	Friday 3 rd September
Year 10 and 11	Monday 6 th September
Year 8 and 9	Tuesday 7 th September

This staggered start, if required, will be put in place to limit the number of pupils who will be required to self-isolate as they return to school for the new term. We of course do not want any children to need to self-isolate when they return or start school, so our testing plan will be organised to reflect this. It will again be voluntary for your child to be tested, and we will seek your permission/cooperation to allow your child to be tested before the dates above, however, your decision won't change their start date if testing was to happen.

As mentioned at the start of this letter, the information I am providing you is relevant and up to date at the time of me writing this letter. I will write to you again before the end of the term to provide the latest information to confirm the arrangements for September. I, together with my senior leadership team, will hold a virtual parent/carers meeting for you on Wednesday 14th July, to explain any information in more detail and for you to ask any questions you may have. The meeting details for this are below, and the meeting will be recorded for you to access after the time if you are unable to make it.

Oaklands Parent Carer Meeting - 14/07/21 1:30pm

Jul 14, 2021 01:30 PM London

Join Zoom Meeting


<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83229605595?pwd=MFJybEdIb2NkUS9kK1Bid2lCbXdZUT09>

Meeting ID: 832 2960 5595

Passcode: gYgB8U

I understand that you may be frustrated that I can't inform you of exactly how the future looks and I share this concern with you. Once I know what will and can happen, I will keep you informed.

Best regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N. Sany' or similar, written in a cursive style.

Mr Oxley

Headteacher