



Dear Varndean families

### **Coronavirus update 10th July**

Now that the vast majority of students in years 7, 8, 9 and 10 have visited the school and talked through their progress with their form tutor our sights are firmly set on September and our aim to open the school fully to all year groups. Our students have told us how much they have missed school, seeing their friends and having their teachers explain things to them face to face - they need school to be open again. We are determined to make that happen and are very excited about teaching and supporting children in person rather than virtually.

There is a huge amount of work still to do in finalising our plans and families should expect more information before we close for the summer and then just before reopening in September. However I do want to share with you some key principles now so that you can see the direction of travel and set out a timeline for the release of further detail.

In essence we aim to do the following:

1. Open the school fully to each year group - all day every day for all students
2. Teach across the subject range including all practical subjects
3. Ensure students have access to subject specialist teachers and as many facilities as possible
4. Introduce a wide range of protective measures to ensure good hand hygiene, ventilation and classroom arrangements across the site
5. Organise students into 'bubbles' or groups (either by class or year group) and minimise mixing between these bubbles
6. Remove activities, like school base assemblies, that would require bubbles to mix
7. Make some small adjustments to the timings of the school day for some year groups to enable staggered start and finish times and reduce mixing at break and lunchtimes
8. Take a school wide approach to recovery that quickly reestablishes routines, rebuilds relationships, focuses on both well being and essential knowledge and enables progress
9. Be ready to revert to offsite learning quickly should there be a second whole school or partial closure
10. Support those who are isolating due to COVID 19 to continue with their learning

These plans are ambitious and are only possible due to the expertise, creativity and flexibility of the staff team here at Varndean. My colleagues are working really hard at the moment to finalise these preparations and you should expect the following:

1. Draft models of the school day/week - by July 17th

2. Further detail of the protective measures in place across the school from September - by July 17th
3. Copy of the full risk assessment for full opening - by Sept 2nd
4. Copies of behaviour and safeguarding protocols - by Sept 2nd
5. Opportunities to hear about daily school life and expectations and ask questions via a webinar Sept 2nd and 3rd

My aim in sharing this information with you is to give you reassurance that we have achieved the right blend of ambition and safety and in reviewing our plans you may wish to examine the full DfE guidance which can be read [here](#).

### ***Enrichment weeks / off site learning***

We have seen some wonderful activities taking place this week and a strong response from the students as they have responded positively to the stimuli offered and the immersion in different subjects.

Next week is the last week of term and includes our first ever virtual sports day. I do hope all children will try some of the challenges presented by the PE team and earn some participation points for their school.

As we always do we will finish the year with our end of year celebration assemblies. Please do encourage your child to join live - it is the coming together of the whole small school community that we are hoping to achieve. Parents are invited to join their children for these live presentations which will look back at what has been achieved across this most extraordinary year as well as revealing the winners of the sports day cup and other key trophies so keenly contested between the four (soon to be five) schools.

Please note that as usual the rest of the timetable is suspended to enable these assemblies to happen which means that Thursday will be the last day for our year 10 provision.

### ***Academic progress review meetings - year 10 16th July***

Year 10 will have an individual progress review with their form tutor via zoom on Thursday 16th July. Parents are invited to join this review which will look back at engagement in these last 4 weeks since wider opening, examine any remaining anxieties about lost learning and gaps in knowledge and make plans for recovering these when we return in September.

### ***Year 11***



Year 11 students should have received a letter from Mr Manville this week regarding results day on the 20th August. We are very much hoping to be able to host this event on site (although there will be some necessary restrictions) given so many milestones have been missed for our year 11 leavers. If conditions with the pandemic are such that we can't proceed then results will be emailed to students via their Varndean account so if your child is a year 11 leaver please encourage them to keep their account live and to check it on the days running up to the 20th so they can be updated about events.

Year 11 leavers may also want to listen to the Prime Minister's message to them which was broadcast this morning in case they missed it live.

### ***Uniform***

We are trying to collect, clean and find a good home for items of Varndean uniform that are no longer needed by families. If you have a blazer, school jumpers, ties or items of PE kit that are in reasonable condition but surplus to requirements then these can be double bagged and deposited in the containers at school reception and we will do the rest.

Reopening the school will be an incredibly complex challenge but it is also a really exciting one. My colleagues and I are optimistic and stand ready to make the most of this opportunity and we look forward to working with you to make reopening as successful as possible for every student.

Please don't forget you can find all of our previous correspondence on our website [here](#).

Kind regards  
Gareth Hughes  
Acting Headteacher

### **Safeguarding and school base contacts**

#### **Angelou**

Sam Whiteman - [samwhiteman@varndean.co.uk](mailto:samwhiteman@varndean.co.uk)

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#### **Russell**

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Our safeguarding team will be contactable **during school hours** if you would like advice on an issue or wish to report a concern.

[safeguarding@varndean.co.uk](mailto:safeguarding@varndean.co.uk)

Vicky Anstiss (Designated Safeguarding Lead) - [07984 221254](tel:07984221254)

Kerry Tester - (Safeguarding Officer) - [07572 707214](tel:07572707214)

To access safeguarding advice (outside school hours) please contact Front Door for Families

Phone: 01273 290400 9am to 5pm Monday to Thursday, 9am to 4.30pm on Fridays

Out-of-hours: 01273 335905 (Emergency Duty Service)