



Dear Varndean families

## Coronavirus update 17th July

### September opening

I am delighted to share further detail with you about our plans for September. The good news is that we will be open to all year groups, starting with year 7 on the 3rd and the other year groups on the 4th and this letter sets out the adaptations and expectations necessary to make this happen.

I appreciate that there is a considerable amount of information to take in and my aims in doing so are as follows:

- To create a sense of optimism that we can restart education and enable students to access the full extent of their educational entitlement
- To provide reassurance to families that we can safely open to all students in September based on the detailed risk assessments we have undertaken
- To enable families to consider the adaptations that are in place so that children have plenty of time to get used to them ready for September

While we will be fully open to all children in September and covering the full range of the curriculum there will be much that will be very different to how school was when we were last fully open in March of this year. Both staff and students will have to get used to new ways of working and learning and I recognise that these changes will have an impact on families too. This information is shared to enable us all to get prepared and it will be supported by webinars in early September to provide precise instructions to students and answer questions that you may have.

1. Changes to the school day - staggered timings for different year groups

The proposed school day model can be accessed here [September model](#).

Activity / expectations	Notes
Each year group has set arrival and departure times.	[We have tried to minimise the stagger to make the day feel as normal as possible and to reduce the disruption to families. It is important that students do not arrive before their scheduled time slot or wait at the end of

	the day for friends. Different year groups will be directed to different entrances - please encourage your child to follow this direction.
Lesson times are slightly adjusted to allow staggering for breaks and lunchtimes	Students will follow their full timetable although some lessons might be slightly shorter.
Break times are staggered	Only two year groups at break at any one time. As lessons are going on during breaks students will be expected to be outside at break once they have been to the toilet. Year groups will be directed to designated areas at break and arrangements made for wet break. A limited service will be offered from the pod at break time so students are encouraged to bring a snack and make sure they have enough water for the day. The canteen will not be open at break Year 7 and 9 will have a short comfort break in the afternoon.
Lunch is staggered	Each year group will be given a designated time in the canteen. There will be no eating in the canteen and all food will be taken outside or to the designated wet break area for each year group
Tutor time - in the morning for some year groups and the afternoon for others	Tutor time will cover our learning for life curriculum and our assembly programme although the majority of assemblies will be virtual.

## 2. Protective measures in school

Activity / expectation	Notes
Any student who has symptoms of COVID 19 (a high temperature, new persistent cough or loss of taste or smell), is living with someone who has or has been told to isolate by NHS Test and Trace officials MUST NOT attend	Please confirm these reasons for absence when contacting the school attendance office. Work will be available through the google classroom for students unable to attend school.

school.	
Students must sanitise / or wash their hands thoroughly on arrival at school. Students must sanitise at each new classroom they arrive at and before eating and drinking.	Hand sanitiser points are near all entrances to the building and will be in every classroom. Students who wish to use their own sanitiser can do but shouldn't share.
Face coverings will be worn by all students and staff when moving around inside the school buildings	Our corridors are narrow and will be busy even with the staggering we have introduced. Wearing face covering is a step that we can all take to help keep the whole community safe. More guidance on face coverings will be provided. Face coverings are not required in classrooms. The school will source face coverings for students but families are encouraged to purchase/make their own if they can.
Students must use the prescribed entrances and follow the one way system inside the building	There will be a one way system in some parts of the school. Students must follow this. Details will be explained before the start of term.
Windows must be left open to ensure good ventilation in every classroom	Good ventilation is a key protective measure and so please ensure students have sufficient uniform to keep warm in the building.
There will be an enhanced cleaning rota in the school.	Every classroom will be deep cleaned every day and extra day time cleaning will mean high touch areas like door handles will be wiped down in the middle of the day. Bacterial wipes will also be available in every classroom should a student wish to wipe down a workstation.

### 3. Lesson adaptations

Activity / expectation	Notes
In line with DfE guidance students have been organised into bubbles / groups. In years 9-11 these are the size of a year group. In	This means that in KS4 students can only mix with students in their year group - this is important to allow all setted groups and



years 7 and 8 they are a tutor group size.	option classes to run. In KS3 students can only be taught in their tutor groups. We can run the timetable but with some adaptations for example we will have to delay the introduction of setted groups in year 8 in English and maths for a short period.
Classrooms have to be reorganised - desks must face forward where possible and teachers have to remain socially distanced from the students (2 metres)	Classrooms will feel different and in some cases look different. Teachers are developing strategies now to teach more from the front of the room. Students will have to adapt too, they will need to be more independent and learn new ways to access support when they are stuck.
Behaviour policies will change slightly	There will be clear protocols at the starts and ends of lessons to ensure students can enter quickly and safely and begin their learning without fuss. Our policy will also reflect our expectation that all students behave in ways that are COVID safe. High standards of behaviour are more important than ever.
Assessment will change	Teachers will find it harder to look at books in lessons and won't be able to mark them as frequently. They will make more use of alternative ways of assessing understanding.
Students will have to provide all of their own equipment none can be lent or shared	We always expect students to be well prepared for school and now it is more important than ever, students will need their own pens, pencils, a ruler and a rubber, Some colouring pencils and a fineliner for art and a calculator for maths and science would also be useful.
Students are expected to stay in lesson all of the time	The guidance places limitations on how our support services like school bases, learning support and the SPACE can operate. We are developing solutions to these challenges but we will need students to be flexible - their access to help may well be more structured than it has been in the past.

Prep will be set through the google classroom	We have become good at using the google classroom to set and mark work - this will continue. This will help students who are off school self isolating who will be able to continue with the work in the google classroom.
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#### 4. General expectations

Activity / expectation	Notes
Students are still expected to wear full school uniform. On days where they are timetabled to have PE they should wear their PE kit to school (changing rooms will not be open)	DfE guidance confirms that uniforms do not need to be washed more frequently than normal nor do they need to be washed in any particular way. We are committed to supporting families that may be struggling with uniforms (read the joint schools pledge <a href="#">here</a> ) so please get in touch with your school base if you need help meeting uniform expectations.
Travelling to and from school - please avoid travel on the buses where possible.	Avoiding using public transport has been and remains a key part of the Government's guidance. Students should walk or cycle to school where possible and should try to travel with students in their bubble if they can. Those who have to use public transport must wear a face covering and should remember that buses are still running at less than 50% capacity.
After school activities and lunchtime clubs	The latest guidance and the staggering of the school day unfortunately make it impossible to run our full range of extra curricular activities. Any that we are able to arrange will be advertised in the Autumn.
Off site learning	We will continue to use google classrooms to set Prep and home learning for students and will continue our weekly newsletters for the first month to make sure you know what is available if your child has to study at home.

Cashless payments	Please note that as of September we will not be accepting any cash payments and all contributions must be made using Parent Pay. If you have any queries about activation codes, please contact <a href="mailto:lynnhill@varndean.co.uk">lynnhill@varndean.co.uk</a>
Visits to the school will be limited	Visits to the school will be much less frequent than usual in the Autumn. This does not mean reducing the frequency of meetings and we will make good use of technology like zoom to communicate with families and other professionals

There is more I could add but I think this will give you a flavour of our intentions and plans. It is important to emphasise that these plans are subject to change as guidance is updated and local circumstances develop and if this is necessary I will write again to update you. I should also emphasise that any confirmed cases in school would be discussed with Public Health England and our response would be guided by their advice.

In the absence of a further update please assume we are moving forward with this approach and look out for information later in the summer about the webinar programme which will inform you further. We will also share the final risk assessment and any updates to policies so that you can see even more depth on the adaptations we have applied.

I would like to make sure that these webinars meet your needs so please do get in touch if there are specific questions that you would like answered and we will endeavour to ensure that these are included in the presentation. Questions should be sent to [mollygoodchild@varndean.co.uk](mailto:mollygoodchild@varndean.co.uk)

### ***Senior student leadership team***

Our senior student leadership are keen to introduce themselves and offer reassurance to students and parents alike about the help they can provide in the Autumn. We are very excited about them starting in post and their can do attitude and sensitivity will be a real asset in September. You can read their letter [here](#).

### ***School Uniform***



Further to the comments above about uniform please can I thank all families who have donated no longer needed uniforms ready for finding a new home. Your generosity will make a big difference to others.

### ***Summer safety***

As ever the summer holidays can bring some risks to young people when they are out and about. Our newsletter has included many sources of support on this topic which you may wish to refer to (linked below) and in addition the RNLI have produced this beach safety advice which we urge you to share with your children.

[#teamVarndean Newsletter 14 15th July 2020](#)

<https://www.varndean.co.uk/news/?pid=3&nid=1&storyid=2652>

<https://rnli.org/pages/beach2020>

### ***First day of term***

Year 7 (only) will start the Autumn term on the 3rd September meeting on the astro turf pitch at 11am. This first day will be important for our newest students who missed their transition visit to the school this term and having the school to themselves for the day will help them to settle in. Their day will finish at 3pm. On Friday 4th Years 8 - 11 will return and all students are expected to attend. There will be an extended tutor time to get used to new procedures before starting lessons. Start and end times will be staggered on the 4th to enable us to embed our new ways of working. We will run a slightly shorter day on Friday 4th to enable us to evaluate the new systems and make any necessary adjustments before Monday 7th. The precise timings for this day can be seen below:

### **Timings for Friday 4th September**

<b>Year group</b>	<b>Start time</b>	<b>Finish time</b>
7	8:40am	1:15pm
8	8:50am	1:30pm
9	9:00am	1:00pm
10	9:10am	1:45pm
11	9:20am	2:00pm



### ***Finally....***

It really has been an extraordinary 4 months. There have been many successes and a few lessons we have learned. I am very proud of what we have achieved as a school and grateful to my colleagues for their creativity, hard work and adaptability. I would also like to thank all of you for your patience, resilience and ongoing support. I have said before it has been a particularly difficult time for parents of late and the partnership between home and school has been an invaluable part of recent achievements. Thank you.

I spoke with Mr Deighan earlier this week and you will be pleased to know that he is recovering well and looking forward to being back at work in the Autumn term. He asked me to pass on his best wishes to you all to thank you for your words of kindness and support in recent times.

I hope you and your family enjoy a restful and healthy summer break.

Please don't forget you can find all of our previous correspondence on our website [here](#) and there is a letter from the Local Authority which I have been asked to share which can be read [here](#).

Kind regards  
Gareth Hughes  
Acting Headteacher

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

#### **Angelou**

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

Fiona Hall - [fionahall@varndean.co.uk](mailto:fionahall@varndean.co.uk)

Lorina Ventura - [lorinaventura@varndean.co.uk](mailto:lorinaventura@varndean.co.uk)

#### **Russell**

Abi Holder - [abigailholder@varndean.co.uk](mailto:abigailholder@varndean.co.uk)

Lorina Ventura - [lorinaventura@varndean.co.uk](mailto:lorinaventura@varndean.co.uk)

#### **Turing**

Georgina Maltby - [georginamaltby@varndean.co.uk](mailto:georginamaltby@varndean.co.uk)

Donna Mills - [donnamills@varndean.co.uk](mailto:donnamills@varndean.co.uk)

Rachel Christy - [rachelchristy@varndean.co.uk](mailto:rachelchristy@varndean.co.uk)





**Ellis**

Sandra Knights - [sandraknights@varndean.co.uk](mailto:sandraknights@varndean.co.uk)

Caroline Ball - [carolineball@varndean.co.uk](mailto:carolineball@varndean.co.uk)

Donna Mills - [donnamills@varndean.co.uk](mailto:donnamills@varndean.co.uk)

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

Kerry Tester - (Safeguarding Officer) - 07572 707214

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)