



Dear Varndean families

Coronavirus update 1st September

As the summer holidays draw to a close I wanted to write to you to update you on arrangements for the start of the new school year later this week.

COVID 19 adaptations

My previous letter [Coronavirus update 17th July](#) described the adaptations we have introduced for the start of the new school year and I hope you have had the opportunity to read this through with your children. As mentioned previously we will expand on this detail for students in a series of webinars for each year group and you are welcome to join with your children or watch the recordings which will be posted on the website the following morning.

The timetables for these live webinars are as follows:

Wednesday 2nd September 2.45pm Year 7 Welcome to Varndean

Register in advance for this webinar:

https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_7P_YtXTQRpKn56OL3TfX0A

Wednesday 2nd September 3.30pm Year 8 Welcome Back

Register in advance for this webinar:

https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_nbknw7BASSi4MEk7xaQPpw

Wednesday 2nd September 4.15pm Year 9 Welcome Back

Register in advance for this webinar:

https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Ji880WwdQzmaFYscCwzQnA

Thursday 3rd September 1.30pm Year 10 Welcome Back

Register in advance for this webinar:

https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_-Xj4QXlQR06qcZYyH8wzsA

Thursday 3rd September 2.00pm Year 11 Welcome Back

Register in advance for this webinar:

https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_3_9cbpaGTOaV0mktqTvdXQ

Amongst the key points that we will cover are a few that I would ask you to reinforce with your children over the next few days so that these practices can become habits early in the new term. These are as follows:

- Any student with COVID 19 symptoms **MUST** not attend school nor should anyone who has been asked to self isolate by NHS test and trace or is isolating following returning from a foreign country and needing to quarantine. If students develop symptoms during the day parents will be contacted and arrangements made for the child to go home.
- The school day has changed and there are different start and end times for each year group. Students must arrive at specific times and breaks and lunchtimes are also staggered. This is to minimise mixing between year group bubbles.
- Movement around the school will be different. Year groups will use different entrances into the school grounds and a one way system is in place inside the building. There will be more restrictions on where students can go at break and lunchtime
- Face coverings will be worn in all communal areas and when moving around the school.
- Students are responsible for some of the protective measures - they must sanitise on arrival at school, after a break and at the start of each lesson. They should try to maintain social distances where they can and will need to follow classroom routines carefully.
- Students will need to bring their own equipment and their own water bottle each day. We cannot lend items and water fountains will be turned off.
- Classrooms will look different with all desks facing forward and lessons may feel a bit different because teachers must remain 2 metres from the students and introduce some new routines.

Our full risk assessment can be read [here](#) and this will be reviewed regularly as the term progresses. As part of this your feedback on our approach will be most welcome and please do send any concerns or questions that you may have to mollygoodchild@varndean.co.uk .

I should also emphasise that in the case of any confirmed cases we will be working closely with the Local Authority and Public Health team and will follow their advice about the steps we would need to take next.

Start of term arrangements and new school day timetable

For ease you can find the arrangements for the first two days of term and the adjusted timetable [here](#). Individual student timetables will be available on Varndean plus from Thursday 3rd September.



Year 7 students

We are really looking forward to meeting our new year 7 students on Thursday. Our successful series of webinars in the summer have given us a glimpse of their talents and we are keen to get to know them better and understand more about them and their gifts.

I would also like to offer a very warm welcome to the families of these students, especially those who are new to the Varndean community. We are here to work with you to make the transition as successful as possible and if there are any issues please do contact your child's school base or andyroberts@varndean.co.uk so we can help resolve any problems.

School uniform

In July I stated our determination to support families with the cost of uniform where necessary and I am pleased to say that we have received a large number of donated items from families to help with this. As a result we have items of uniform available for collection between 10am and 1pm on Wednesday in our eco hut (accessed from the Ditchling Road). There are a range of items (including PE kit, boots and trainers) and it is all clean and free. Please wear a mask once in the building and respect social distancing whilst queuing. Knowing the size you need will help as items cannot be tried on. If you can't make it to school please email your child's school base with your requirements and we will see if we can put it aside for you.

Many thanks to all the families who donated items.

School lunches

The canteen will be open at lunchtime each day although please note that there will initially be a reduced food offer as we adapt to new restrictions in our kitchen areas. The Pods will be open at breaktime but with some restrictions so students are advised to bring a drink and a snack to school for ease.

Any students who have lost their lunch cards should email food@varndean.co.uk so a replacement can be organised.

Parents will need to top up parentpay accounts accordingly to buy food and an overdraft facility will be in place for the first few days to ensure everyone can be fed each day.

Access codes for ParentPay (and Varndean Plus) will be sent out shortly if they are still required.



Finally....

The start of the new school year always brings some excitement and a few nerves and that is certainly the case this year given the changes we have had to make and the disruption to education through the summer term. For students, staff and families this September start is like no other. Making it work so that it is safe and successful for everyone will require preparation and partnership and I am pleased to note that we have prepared well and stand ready to work together with you during the coming weeks and months for the best interests of your children. Please do contact your child's school base in the first instance if you have any concerns arising from the first few days of term.

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

Lennox

Shelley Baker - shelleybaker@varndean.co.uk

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Ellis



VARNDEAN
SCHOOL

Sandra Knights - sandraknights@varndean.co.uk

Caroline Ball - carolineball@varndean.co.uk

Donna Mills - 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

Vicky Anstiss (Designated Safeguarding Lead) - vickyanstiss@varndean.co.uk

Kerry Tester - (Safeguarding Officer) - kerrytester@varndean.co.uk

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)