

LF/JG

July 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

As promised I am writing to update you on plans for September. Whilst there is still some work to do to finalise arrangements, and this will be on-going over the summer, I can give you a good idea of how school will look in September.

Our priority at Alder Grange is to get all pupils back to school, as safely as possible, to prioritise wellbeing and manage any anxieties or worries they may have and to return to a broad and balanced curriculum. We aim for school to feel as 'normal' as possible in September. These priorities underpin all our planning for how school will operate in September.

As I said last week, we are not proposing to make any changes to the start and finish times of the school day and pupils will follow their usual timetables. We feel it is important for all pupils to have access to all subjects and a broad and balanced curriculum from the start of term. Pupils will access specialist teaching and in specialist rooms. The importance of the Arts and PE alongside PSE and wellbeing are going to be just as essential to our pupils as they get used to returning to school.

We will be restricting pupil movement around school as far as possible, but in order to access these specialist classrooms, such as in Art, Technology, Sport, drama and music there will need to be some movement during the day. This means year groups will be on corridors at the same times on occasions. Guidance suggests that if we keep pupils moving and follow a one-way system this is safe to do. Staff will be stationed on corridors will ensure pupils move around school in a safe and sensible manner, and arrive to their next lesson promptly. Signage is being increased to make sure pupils know the correct route around school.

Pupils will be kept in their year groups as far as is possible, and we will have each year group allocated to a different entrance door in the morning. They will be directed to their door on the first day of term. All form groups for each year will be based together. We have also been assured that there is a plan to make sure local buses are sufficient to get all our pupils to school safely.

All classrooms will be equipped with hand sanitiser, wipes and tissues, pupils are welcome to bring their own hand sanitiser too, and we would encourage them to do so. Classrooms will be arranged so that all desks face the front and teachers will be teaching from the front of the room. Desks will be cleaned when year groups move between them and we are employing more cleaning staff during the school day to facilitate this. At break, lunchtime and the end of school pupils will leave through the nearest door. Years 7,8,9 a few minutes before Years 10 & 11. Sixth formers will have exclusive use of the sixth form building and will be able to move freely between lessons, rooms will be arranged in the same way as in the main school, and cleaned frequently. Students will be expected to wash hands or use hand sanitiser frequently.

All homework will be set on Google classroom and pupils will receive guidance on setting this up in September. In addition the use of Google classroom for sharing lesson resources will be continuing. One of the real positives of lockdown has been the use of this resource. We will make sure parents get information about how to use it too. It should make keeping an eye on your child's homework much easier for you.

We will be able to have year group assemblies, but not full school assemblies. We will make more use of virtual assemblies too.

We are conscious that some pupils may be worried about break time and toilet facilities. Staff will be on duty at break to monitor and avoid overcrowding as this is one area where we will not be able to separate year groups. We only have one large set of toilets for pupil use at break and lunchtime.

Each year group will access the dining room at a different time on a rota. The lunch menu will be restricted to meal deals and served in grab bags. Pupils will be able to eat outside. In addition we are installing a 'snack shack' outside so pupils can purchase breakfast, break time and lunchtime drinks and snacks. Hot and cold meals will be available. A longer break will take place to facilitate this, but no shortening of lessons. Outside spaces will be allocated to each year group.

Pupils should bring full equipment to school, and avoid sharing this with other pupils. We will be discouraging visitors in to school and as such, will be requesting that parents do not bring forgotten kit, etc. in to school. We will be operating a cashless system so if lunch money is needed you will be able to add online (more info on this to follow).

All new arrangements will be fully explained to pupils on their return in September. The start of term arrangements, have been designed to give new pupils in Year 7 and 12 additional transition support following cancelled induction sessions this summer. Details are as follows:

Thursday 3rd September: Year 7 and 12 in school all day for induction activities at the usual time of 8.50am for a 9am start.

Friday 4th September: All year groups in school for induction activities at 8.50am for a 9am start.

Monday 7th September: Lessons begin at 8.50am for a 9am start.

If your child currently has a school Care Plan and there is any recent update or amendment to it please can you let Mr Birtles know prior to the return to school in September?

We will be explaining full arrangements to all pupils at the start of term and clarifying our behaviour expectations. I am mindful that managing widely varying levels of anxiety amongst staff and pupils will make adherence to rules essential. We will not tolerate pupil behaviour that deliberately puts anyone at risk of infection or increased stress. Behaviour support and additional counselling/mentoring for pupils will be focused upon getting all pupils back in to 'normal' routines. I am aware that a number of families have suffered bereavements over the period of lockdown. If this applies to your family we would appreciate you letting us know, so we can provide support if needed.

No sanctions will be given to any pupils who have fallen behind with work in lockdown. We will endeavour to get all pupils feeling happy and safe initially, whilst investigating gaps in learning in order to plan lessons and revision appropriately. Those taking examinations in 2021 will be given information about revision sessions at the start of term.

These arrangements are likely to be amended if the situation or guidance changes, work will continue in school over the summer to prepare for the start of term and we will be monitoring everything closely in September. I will endeavour to keep you informed at each stage and let you know what I know as soon as updates occur.

As ever, do get in touch if you have any queries or concerns, the dialogue between school and parents has been invaluable in the recent weeks and I hope this can be maintained as we move forward in to the new term. I cannot thank you enough for your support and positive feedback.

Yours sincerely



J Griffiths
Headteacher