

The Elton High School

Quality • Care • Integrity



Headteacher: Mr J C Wilton MA (Hons.)

July 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

Further to my notices in last week's final issue of the KIT bulletin, I would like to take this opportunity to clarify some important information about the end of term and our reopening in September.

The end of term sees a small number of staff leaving our school. Mrs Hallsworth is relocating to the Midlands and has been with us since the start of her teaching career in 2014. Mrs Shepherd has been with us since 2018 and is leaving to take up a Head of Geography post at a school in Blackpool, while Mrs Thompson is also moving on following successful completion of her first full year of teaching. While they have been at Elton for varying periods of time, all three staff have made excellent contributions to our school and will be sorely missed by so many of our students and staff. We hope that they stay in touch and we wish them every success for the future.

Before I refer to the changes for September, I would like to reaffirm that many of our routines and processes remain unaltered. We continue to ask for your support in ensuring that our students meet our high expectations about appearance and manner. The uniform looks fantastic and we ask for your support in ensuring that the students wear it in the right way. Girls should not alter the length of the skirt and jewellery remains banned. Trainers are not part of the uniform and standard school shoes should be worn by all students, unless they have a recognised medical condition. All students should be keenly aware of our requirements regarding equipment, with the Elton journal, pens, pencil and maths equipment all being a daily requirement for all year groups. Our policy for mobile phones remains simple and it works well - phones are to be turned off during school hours and are confiscated and returned the following day, if seen to be used by the students. All these processes support the positive 'feel' that is apparent around our school and we appreciate your support in ensuring the students meet these expectations. Our culture will be reinforced with the introduction of a new Reward/Behaviour system in September, which is based around the three principles of Ready – Respectful – Safe and we look forward to giving more details about how the system will work in the new term.

The return in September raises challenges on a number of levels. Most of our students will have been out of school for over five months and will understandably feel anxious about the new term. Aside from worrying about their studies, we appreciate that many will be concerned about getting back into some form of daily routine while there may also be some uneasiness about their own health and that of their families. All our plans are based around the principle of making school safe and secure, providing structure and support for all the students so that they can be as happy and comfortable as possible. Further to this, we ask that you respond to the questions on the linked googleform <https://forms.gle/f8oRpuXzoPoKciiG7> in time for our return in September. We ask you to complete the googleform by **2 September 2020 at the latest** – it will only take a few minutes of your time and will reinforce our support plans.

When the government released their guidance about the reopening of schools (it can be read through the link <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>) they were clear in noting that all students are required to return, with "the benefits of being back in school far outweighing the very low risk from coronavirus." With this directive, schools are required to put measures in place that limit the level of risk for students and staff. The essential measures that we need to follow are:

- Enhanced cleaning arrangements across the school,

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- Robust hygiene arrangements,
- Consideration of how to reduce contact and maximise distancing between those in school.

The first two points are relatively straightforward, but it is the third point that has required extensive planning. High schools have been permitted to put students in year group 'bubbles', limiting contact and interaction with other year groups. At the same time, we need to make sure that "the curriculum remains broad and ambitious, with all students continuing to be taught a wide range of subjects."

The attached document provides clear, organised details about our new procedures for September. I ask that you look through it, discuss it with your child and think about the implications for your own routines and arrangements. The main points that I would like to emphasise are as follows:

- The school building will not open until 8.40am every day. Students are encouraged to walk or ride to school and should try to time their arrival in line with the school opening. They should have coats and outdoor clothing to provide protection from the weather as needed.
- While some schools in Bury are making packed lunches for all students compulsory, we do not feel that this is appropriate and we will be providing hot snacks and lunches. However, there is no doubt that risk will be minimised if students bring in their own lunch and we do encourage as many as possible to do so.
- All students will be provided with a card to make contactless payments on their school dinner accounts. The card will be the responsibility of each student and there will be a charge of £5 if it is lost and needs replacing.
- We need to limit the handling of cash in school and ask parents/carers to use the online system of payments. If you are not registered then please do so through www.bury.gov.uk/payforit (and select 'School payments').

As well as the practical plans shown in the attached document, please be reassured that we will be putting in place a range of activities and sessions that will support the students' wellbeing. Our school counsellor, Ms Edwards, will be leading group and individual sessions and our Behaviour Mentors will provide their usual excellent level of support, while form tutors and Learning Co-ordinators will be made fully aware of any issues and will be given access to support processes. Our Student Development Days, form group activities and assemblies will also be shaped so as to support students' emotional and mental wellbeing.

As outlined in the recent KIT newsletter, our arrangements for the first few days of the new term are as follows:

- Tuesday and Wednesday (1 and 2 September 2020) are staff training days, with school closed for students.
- Thursday (3 September 2020) we will be open for our new Year 7 students only. They should arrive to school for the usual starting time of 8.45am and the day will finish at 3.00pm.
- Friday (4 September 2020) we will be open for Year 7 and Year 11 only, again with the usual start and end times.
- Monday (7 September 2020) we will open to all students. There may be a staggered start to the day and details will be sent in that first week of September.

I will write again at the start of the new term to provide an update about the arrangements. In the meantime, I hope that the information on the attached document and within this letter provides you with a clearer picture about how we will operate after the summer break, while we appreciate your input on the googleform. As always, I welcome any feedback about these plans and am available to answer any questions, concerns or queries; please feel free to contact me directly through my personal school email account wiltonj@eltonhigh.bury.sch.uk Thanks again for your fantastic support during the past few months and I hope that you have a restful, enjoyable summer holiday.

Kind regards



Jonathan Wilton

Headteacher