

August 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

With the start of the new term now only a few days away we would like to take this opportunity to clarify the most important pieces of information for your child's new start at Elton High. It has obviously been a difficult period for our new students, with the lockdown affecting their final months in Year 6 and also the transition events for high school. However, the details outlined in this letter and the attached document will hopefully give a clear outline about how we are prepared for our new cohort of students.

We are keenly aware that the reopening of our school raises challenges on a number of levels, particularly for our new Year 7 students who are coming into a high school environment for the first time. All our plans for the new term are therefore based around the principle of making school safe and secure, providing structure and support so that the students can be as happy and comfortable as possible. Further to this, I would be most grateful if you could respond to the questions on the linked googleform <https://forms.gle/f8oRpuXzoPoKciiG7> in time for our return in September. Thanks to all of you who have already done this and can those who have not yet done so please complete the form by **1 September 2020 at the latest** – it will only take a few minutes of your time and will reinforce our support plans and give us useful information about the needs and concerns of the children.

While we were not able to run the usual Year 7 Parent Information Evening in June, we are delighted that we have now been able to arrange some information sessions for next week. The sessions will last approximately 40 minutes allowing for questions and queries at the end, while appropriate social distancing measures will obviously be followed. We ask that no more than one parent/carers attends the session so that numbers can be managed effectively, though we do feel that it will be helpful to bring your child so they can also listen to the presentation. Sessions will take place in the School Sports Hall at the following times:

Tuesday 1st September – 5pm – Surnames starting A to E

Tuesday 1st September – 6.30pm – Surnames starting F to K

Wednesday 2nd September – 5pm – Surnames starting L to R

Wednesday 2nd September – 6.30pm – Surnames starting S to Z

If there is an unavoidable prior appointment and you cannot attend the relevant slot, then please let Miss Helme know directly (helmev@eltonhigh.bury.sch.uk) and you may be able to attend an alternative session. For those parents/carers who are unable to attend at any time, we will also organise a 'loom' version of the presentation that can be watched online as necessary.

As outlined in the letter that was sent at the start of July, Year 7 will have two full days at the beginning of term which will be used to get to know their form group, form teacher and the systems and layout of the school. Arrangements are as follows:

- Tuesday and Wednesday (1 and 2 September 2020) are staff training days, with school being closed for students. As noted above, Year 7 Information sessions will take place at 5.00pm and 6.30pm.



- Thursday (3 September 2020) we will be open for our **new Year 7 students only**. They should arrive to school for 8.40am for the 8.45am start, and the day will finish at 3.00pm. The students do not need to bring their PE kit on the first day, though we remind them to bring along their completed 'Bridge to Elton' booklet that was sent before the summer break.
- 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 from that day onwards.
- School buses are running as in previous years, though students will obviously be required to wear face masks when travelling on those buses. The 810 and 896 services are in place from Radcliffe, while the 898 and 905 have now been replaced by the Y43 and Y38 respectively, which follow the same route. Details of the bus timetable are attached with this letter and also on our school website.

Our plans for September are based around following the government guidance which states that students should be placed in year group 'bubbles', limiting contact and interaction with other year groups. I ask that you go through the attached document again and discuss it with your child, because although we have done everything possible to keep school feeling as 'normal' as possible, there are a number of key changes to our daily routines. The main points 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, this is something that we have avoided 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.
- From late October, all students will be provided with a card to make contactless payments on their school dinner accounts. However, until that point all payments can only be made using the online system – cash cannot be brought into school for dinner payments. If you are not registered for the online system then please do so through www.bury.gov.uk/payforit (and select 'School payments'). If you need to know your child's UPR number, then ring our school office (0161 7631434 or email school through the main address).

We look forward to seeing our new students arrive to school wearing the right uniform and looking smart and well presented. Girls should not alter the length of the skirt and jewellery remains banned, while trainers are not part of the uniform and standard school shoes should be worn by all students. All students should be 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 the same as always 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 of these basic expectations help to promote the positive culture across our school which will be reinforced in September with the introduction of a new Reward/Behaviour system. It is based around the three principles of Ready – Respectful – Safe and we look forward to giving more details about how the system works in the next few weeks.

As always, the guiding principle within Elton High is to develop confident, self-assured young people who can fulfil their academic potential and are supported to be articulate, considerate

and socially aware. While our most recent Year 11 students faced real challenges in recent months with the uncertainty and stress caused by the cancellation of exams, it was so rewarding to see them in school on Results Day. Their final GCSE outcomes were outstanding and a very fair reflection on the efforts that they have made with their teachers over the past five years. But more importantly than their results, it was their manner and positive relationships with others which impressed the most and which underlines the 'Elton way' of doing things. They handled the past few months with resilience and maturity and were a credit to our school – we wish them every success for their next steps and look forward to them keeping in touch as they progress with their chosen career paths.

With the return to a full reopening, the 'Elton Times' newsletter which will again be published in the new term and will be emailed every fortnight. The newsletter will continue to provide a detailed update about what is happening across our school and we appreciate you taking the time to read the update when it is released every couple of weeks.

I do hope that this letter and the attached document provide clear guidance about our processes for the new term. It has been a very difficult period for all students, parents and school staff, but the strength of our school is based around us working together and I am confident that we will continue to move from strength to strength even in these more uncertain times. We are really looking forward to working with our new Year 7 cohort and have no doubt that they will have a fantastic time over the next five years. 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 support and we look forward to working with you over the next five years.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jonathan Wilton', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jonathan Wilton
Headteacher