



16 July 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

I am writing to introduce myself as the new head of Hampstead School and update you on our plans for a full re-opening in September.

This will be my second spell at Hampstead; I started here as a newly qualified teacher at the beginning of my career. I stayed for four years, a length of time that pales into insignificance when compared to the years of service many of our staff have given, but I have always felt a very strong connection to the school. Hampstead School reflects – and has shaped – my educational values. It is a truly comprehensive school, seeking to serve its local community. It is part of a strong local authority working to ensure high standards through co-operation rather than competition.

In returning to the school after more than a decade, it is clear that many things have stayed the same. The richness of the curriculum, the strength of pastoral care and the commitment to innovative classroom practice continues to set the school apart. Students continue to have a deep curiosity about the world around them and are encouraged to recognise the importance of effort and kindness. A strong sense of inclusivity is achieved without sacrificing academic rigour.

At the same time, some significant things have changed. There is a fantastic new building and state-of-the-art sports facilities, replacing the leaking block in which I taught history lessons and the concrete 'cage' in which staff played five-a-side football. The school has been at the forefront of curriculum reform and is now recognised by UNICEF as a 'Rights Respecting School'. The Sixth Form has grown in reputation and size; it now caters for record numbers.

Of course, the biggest change is the context in which we now find ourselves. The COVID-19 epidemic has turned our world upside down, but we are now starting to move back to some form of normality. As you may be aware, the government released guidance on July 2nd for the full re-opening of schools in September. The guidance is extensive; we have spent the last week adapting risk assessments, the structure of our school day, our curriculum model, the timetable, and catering arrangements to ensure Hampstead School will be a safe place to be without undermining the quality of our educational provision.

In short, we are confident that we can implement a clear system of controls to effectively limit risk. This system of controls will include:

- Strict protocols to deal with those who display COVID-19 symptoms
- Regular opportunities to wash and/or sanitize hands
- Promotion of respiratory hygiene and provision of additional bins and tissues
- Enhanced cleaning in all areas
- The minimizing of contact and introduction of social distancing wherever possible

We will write again in mid-August with further detail on what students can expect when they return to school. However, in the short term we wanted to highlight some key points.

1) Start of term arrangements

The guidelines are very clear in instructing schools to protect the welfare of staff and students as they prepare for re-opening. The vast majority of students, and a significant number of staff, have not been in school since March. The school that they return to will be a very different place. In light of this, we have developed a carefully crafted induction programme designed to reintegrate students and staff.

Date	Event	Time
Wednesday 2 nd September and Thursday 3 rd September	Staff training and induction	All day
Friday 4 th September	Year 11 induction Year 13 induction	0900-1130 1200-1430
Monday 7 th September	Year 10 induction Year 7 induction	0900-1130 1200-1430
Tuesday 8 th September	Year 7 full school day Year 8 induction Year 9 induction	0825-1455 0900-1130 1200-1430
Wednesday 9 th September	Years 7 to 11 and Year 13 in school – full time school begins	0825-1515
Year 12 students will have an induction session on Friday 11 th September and will begin their normal timetables on Monday 14 th September.		

2) Structure of the school day

As part of a suite of measures designed to reduce contact and maintain social distancing, the timings of the school day will change slightly in order to stagger the arrival and departure of different year groups. Students should aim to arrive in school at the following times:

Year group	Arrival time	Departure time
Year 7	0825 – and go to tutor base	1455
Year 8	0830 – and go to tutor base	1500
Year 9	0835 – and go to tutor base	1505
Year 10	0855 – and go to Period 1	1510
Year 11		1515
Year 12	In time for first timetabled lesson or tutor time at 1100	Following final timetabled lesson.
Year 13		

3) School uniform

Students will be expected to wear full school uniform for their induction session and on their full return to school. The only exception to this will be on days that they have PE; on these days, students will be expected to wear full PE kit, removing the necessity to use changing rooms.

4) Staff training and remote curriculum development

The staggering of the start and end of the school day will increase the working hours of our staff and reduce the ability to schedule training before and after school. In addition, the DfE guidelines state that schools must develop a remote curriculum that can be implemented immediately in the case of an individual having to self-isolate or a localised or national lockdown. In response to these factors, we plan to calendar a fortnightly lunchtime finish for students. This will create the time necessary to balance staff working hours, invest in staff training and develop our remote curriculum.

This will be launched following the successful reintegration of students into school; further detail will follow in September.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Hampstead School staff for the warm welcome they have given me. I would also like to recognise the incredible amount of work they have put in over the past week in response to the government guidelines. In many cases, this work will continue over the summer break. It is all designed to ensure that Hampstead School is a safe place for your son or daughter to reconnect with friends, experience a rich curriculum and maximise their potential.

We cannot wait to welcome our students back to school.

All best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Matt Sadler', written in a cursive style.

Matt Sadler
Head (Designate)