



ST GEORGE'S SCHOOL

Parent Bulletin

26th March 2021

Information

Dear Parents

This has been another interesting week finalising how teacher assessed grades will be generated and sharing that with students, staff, and parents. At the same time, we have been working this week on tasking which normally takes up much of July and August - getting the preparation done for a school restart of "normal operations". The planning and deconfliction of this is non trivial, but it is exciting to be building into next term's "normal St Georges" some of the things which we innovated in pandemic and which worked really well.

Not so exciting is receiving 60 pages of revised "How to play schools in the Covid Era" operational guidance from DfE this afternoon. The last day of term. And after a long wait, getting 55 pages of guidance from JCQ about teacher assessed grade award. This afternoon. The last day of term. What a thoughtful Easter present from the educational establishment to senior teachers all over the country.

Start of term and de-bubble arrangements:

- Students will report to their tutor base at 0840: this is their substantive mixed age tutor base as per normal St George's.
- Students' timetables will be viewable on edulink to find that first port of call: in tutor base they will all be given a paper copy of their timetable as well as a map of the school.
- Year 7 will, at first, line up between lessons in Watts playground, and will be taken by prefects to their next class. As in September, expect us to be forgiving if someone gets lost.
- As far as possible we hope uniform can be complete and fit: items can be bought online at <https://www.stevensons.co.uk/>
- Though we understand some parents may wish to await the opening of non essential retail to be sure of size.
- Staff have been pretty tolerant of minor uniform misdemeanours since we returned - there have been more important messages to land with students than our unhappiness at ear studs being in or make up being very evident. As we return to normal operation, students need to be ready for some old standards to be revived, as well as old opportunities!
- School timings revert to normal: 0840 register, 1540 finish Mon-Thursday (or 1455 on Friday)
- School bus companies have all been contacted with this information
- We expect mask wearing in corridors and one way systems in corridors to continue for the moment. Students must have a mask. It remains the case that students have to wear a mask in class if their teacher requests this - it has been uncommon.

Exams and assessments for Year 11 and 13

We will continue to be in frequent communication about these with the year groups and students involved. In the last 48 hours much work has gone in to checking we are mindful of access arrangements and are ready to deliver them for in class assessments. One feature of this is lap tops.

Students who have a laptop as an access arrangement cannot use their own, and must collect a school one, but in this period they are to collect from LEARNING SUPPORT

Lunch Rota



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Year 7,8,9 enter Aim Higher end

Early Lunches, Year 10 and 11 enter Monk end

All dishes are available at both ends. The Dining Room is no longer divided. You no longer have to wait until the year ahead has finished, or sit separately.

Summer first half 2021

1300: Year 7 and staff

1315: Year 8, and early lunches + Y11

1330: Year 9 and 10

1340: 6th form either end

All year groups will have access to break snacks in the Dining Room, entering from the same ends as at lunchtime, and eating in the Dining Room or Grant Quad.

Special arrangements for Monday 15th April:

	Goddard	Grant	Monk	Watts
0840-0850	Register with tutors	Register with tutors	Register with tutors	Register with tutors
0850-0925	Tutor Time	Chapel	Tutor Time	House Assembly
0925-1000	Chapel	Tutor Time	House Assembly	Tutor Time
1000-1035	Tutor Time	House Assembly	Tutor Time	Chapel
10.35-1100	Break			
11.00-12.00	Lesson 3			
12.00-1300	Lesson 4			
1300-1400	Lunch			
1400-1410	Register with tutors	Register with tutors	Register with tutors	Register with tutors
1410-1440	House Assembly	Tutor Time	Chapel	Tutor Time
1440-1540	Lesson 5			

Homework restart



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Homework will be set to the normal timetable in Years 7-10 and 12. However, it may differ in form, or be assessed differently, as the focus on staff for the first weeks back has to be on the marking and assessment of exam years to generate TAGS.

Re-start to extra curricular activities

In parallel to normal school operations, we are restarting house competitions which will take place imminently in netball and basketball, and also in touch rugby and lacrosse. Music orchestras and choirs and ensembles have to wait a little longer, but should be running by mid May.

We will be entering our normal summer athletics and rounders competitions, though some thought will need to be given to arrangements for these, such as the need to mask on coach transport etc. Each lacrosse squad will have a Saturday morning practice in the first half of term. We will update more via parent bulletin and by updating the school calendar.

We also intend to restart mentoring of Year 7 students by Year 12 for a short period as they get used to their new St George's experience. **Great feedback on our students...**

Came from the testers who worked with them over the last two weeks who commented:

"It has also been great to see so many students who after having asked them to do something that made them gag and sneeze and cause their eyes to water continued to be kind and polite!"

"This role was relatively easy and this was in no small part due to the well behaved, grateful and courteous children that came to be tested."

Over 11 days our brilliant volunteers conducted 3664 tests, with no positive Covid case found. So we have had to put no one, and no contacts, back into lockdown. Needless to say we are very chuffed. We have left our test site set up just in case the government chooses to make another last minute announcement...

But important to also think about

Messaging from members of the Harpenden Community about troublesome teenagers in town I guess it's inevitable that with nowhere else to go, young people have been gathering in public spaces, and sometimes this has been to the perceived detriment of local residents. The local secondary heads have all had missives from residents variously in the Roundwood area about young people gathering after midnight playing loud music, damage to properties surrounding a play park in Southdown, and leaving litter in Rothamsted Park.

We have no way of knowing if any of the young people concerned attend this school. My experience, as previously shared, is that when I see students out and about maybe eating snacks on the common, they leave where they were in good order. I know they do because my dog Jim complains to me about the lack of discarded foodstuffs.

However, can we impress on you that you really need to know where your son and daughter are, and what they are doing? We all know what the rules are for meeting up: and the fact students have to meet in large groups at school does not give them license to do the same out of hours.

We hope that as it becomes allowable to meet outside from this weekend in private spaces, students, other residents will find the action of a minority of young people less problematic.

Testing and positive case reporting



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Your lovely offspring will have been given 2 boxes of Lateral Flow Tests kits after their last test in school. There is the expectation that home testing will continue over the Easter holidays. You must:

- a) **report a positive test to school** if you **receive your test results within the first 48 hours** of the holidays beginning. Please include the following information in your email, as this will help us expedite the track and trace process.

- 1: Name of student and Date of Birth
2. Date of onset of symptoms (and type of symptoms)
3. Date of positive test
4. When the student/staff member was last in school
5. Year group
6. Any specific issues or concerns

Please also include a contact number for yourself, as it is likely that we will require a conversation with you.

- b) Receive a positive test beyond the 48 hour timeframe of school ending **BUT you had symptoms when you were last in school**. Please note that this is not just last in school **BUT having SYMPTOMS on your last day in school**.
- c) The absence line will not be in action so you **MUST** report your Covid test result via the **Covidholiday@stgeorges.herts.sch.uk** email address.
- d) If you receive a positive case within the holidays you should report the case via the absence line at the return to school, especially if your child is self isolating.

Remember if you test positive from a home testing kit, you **MUST** then book a PCR test at a registered testing centre to have your results verified. Boarding students have a different arrangement for Lateral Flow Testing upon their return to school in the summer term.

On Monday 12th April, all students will be given six more Lateral Flow Tests to take home. These tests cover the period 12th April to 3rd May.

Year 7 the “nicest” in the last 21 years

Since the year 2000, we have proactively surveyed every incoming Year 7 cohort around Christmas with a survey tool to measure their “Quality of Life in School”. This is both to get a feel for the dynamic of the cohort overall, but also to identify anyone facing mistreatment or having a bumpy time in their interaction with peers. It uses 40 questions to determine how many times children experienced certain positive or negative behaviours in the previous week, such as being teased, told a joke, struck, helped with prep and so on.

Our scores are always way better than the index ranges expected in English state schools. On the questions used to determine a “bullying index”, most English schools sit in the range of 4 to 8, with higher numbers signifying more bullying. Having been at the low end of the 4-8 range in 2002-4, since 2010 we have rarely exceeded 2, and our current Year 7 scored just 0.3.



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In schools in England, the expected index score for "General Aggression" is between 15 and 30. Again we have been on an improving trend, with scores only once above 10 in the last 15 years. Our current Year 7 scored 4.19. These are the best results in recorded history.

We have been using these very positive results to talk about the ways we still need to be better: including people who feel left out, standing up for people even if they are not our friend and the best way to do that, being sensitive to people who are different in background or skin colour or, going forward, in sexuality. It's not a good school until it's good for everybody.

Are you concerned about your young person's mental health?

We are very lucky to have seven members of staff who are dedicated to looking after your child's mental health in our Student Services Team. Please contact our Pastoral Support Manager, Mrs Lyn McCarney-Redford, if you have any concerns or questions and the team will do their best to support your young person through any challenging time: lmccarney-redford@stgeorges.herts.sch.uk

Speak to your young people about mental health

We encourage you to speak to your young people about how they are feeling. If you really want the truth; it's worth asking twice! There is much in the media about mental health and suicide at the moment so it's important you have that conversation with your young person.

What do I say? Here are a few examples:

"Have you ever felt low or anxious for a long period of time?"

Feeling low or anxious is ok. If those periods of time last more than a few days there could be more to it and it might be worth a chat with GP.

"Have you had messages from friends sharing things about their mental health that have worried you?"

Help your young person understand their level of responsibility when supporting friends. Is the issue above their emotional maturity? If so, this can impact their own mental health. It's ok to involve an adult so their friend gets the help they need. Things like 'I'm sorry to hear you feel that way, I think you should tell your....' (insert appropriate adult) or 'I wish I could do more to help but I don't really know what to say. Can you email the school and ask for support?'

If another young person is talking about wanting to end their life it's important they get the appropriate support, a call to the child's parent for example. If a child is at high risk they should call the Samaritans on 112 or 999 if in immediate danger.

Our young people are precious and we need them to know we are here to support them. No problem is too big or too small. Everyone has the right to feel safe.

Contacting the Head

Please be advised that the most appropriate way of contacting the Headmistress is via admin@stgeorges.herts.sch.uk We can reassure you that this email account is only accessible by the Headmistress and her PA. hbarton@stgeorges.herts.sch.uk is only active as the Headmistress has been a member of the school community for so long. It is not looked at on a regular basis, and is only accessible to her on her mobile phone. Communication sent to hbarton@ is likely to be missed or not responded to as it is not the Headmistress's daily view for work.

Actions



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Are you having a spring-clean?



Have you found threads, buttons, ribbons, fabric, beads/sequins, crafts bits, etc. that you no longer want/need? Or maybe you have contacts that could help us source these items? We would LOVE to use them in Textiles! Any donations gratefully received. Please pass donations onto Design and Technology via your student or via Goddard office labelled for DT Textiles.



If you have any queries please email lbailey@stgeorges.herts.sch.uk

Thoughts

John 15, vs 13

Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

Easter, a story of good over bad.....the sadness of death.....of the loss of a friend.....of letting people down.....and of being forgiven..... the gift of life.....the prospect of new birth..... Need I say more? Probably not. We have seen sacrificial giving by many this year.....for greater love hath no man than to lay down his life for his friends.....what started 2000 years ago, still lives and is evident in many around us. So this Easter, pause to reflect, pause to celebrate and pause to be inspired.

Wishing you all God's grace, peace and blessing this Easter time.

Miss B

Signposting (click on each to find out more)

Easter Happy Holiday activity programme for children entitled to free school meals

Hertfordshire County Council has joined forces with the Herts Sports Partnership to organise a programme of activity for the Easter holidays.

There are some holiday face-to-face schemes running in different venues across the county for children and young people aged between 5-16 years old.

Eligible families can book for free and should have been sent a code. If you haven't received this, please use the temporary code #E77ZD.

You will be able to search for any schemes close to you and book from Monday 22nd March. Places are limited and strictly on a first come first served basis so be quick – [book online here](#).

In addition, there are a range of fun [online resources](#) aimed at providing ideas and activities to achieve 60 minutes of physical activity each day for you and your family.

ARRIVA UK BUS SERVICE



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Full timetable details can be found via www.arrivabus.co.uk/help/coronavirus/coronavirus-timetable-information

Details of our direct debit schemes can be found on the links below

Child/Scholar tickets are for students up to and including year 11

<https://www.arrivabus.co.uk/school-travel>

Student tickets are for any student (6th form upwards) regardless of age, as long as they hold a valid student ID

www.arrivabus.co.uk/student-travel

For your students, parents and carers enquiries, their dedicated mailbox is talktous@arriva.co.uk