

## Welcoming all students back in September

### Questions and Answers

#### **Is my child allowed to come to school on a motorised scooter?**

No. It is currently illegal to use motorised scooters on the roads or paths therefore students are not allowed to come to school in this way. Motorised scooters are therefore not allowed on site.

#### **How will students be kept in their Year “bubbles” during break and lunchtime?**

At both sites, the café and outdoor spaces have been divided into three discrete areas for each year group to use.

#### **What is happening with the Duke of Edinburgh’s Award?**

We are working with the DofE Award body on the different ways we can adapt the programme to enable students to complete the Award. Our sincere hope is that students will be allowed to go on expeditions in the summer of 2021.

More details will be provided in the Autumn Term.

#### **What happens if someone in a “bubble” tests positive?**

In the event of someone testing positive, Walton High will contact the local health protection team. This team will also contact us directly if they become aware that someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) attended the school – as identified by NHS Test and Trace.

The health protection team will carry out a rapid risk assessment to confirm who has been in close contact with the person during the period that they were infectious, and ensure they are asked to self-isolate.

The health protection team will work with Walton High to guide us through the actions we need to take. Based on the advice from the health protection team, Walton High must send home those people who have been in **close contact** with the person who has tested positive, advising them to self-isolate for 14 days since they were last in close contact with that person when they were infectious.

Close contact means:

- direct close contacts - face to face contact with an infected individual for any length of time, within 1 metre, including being coughed on, a face to face conversation, or unprotected physical contact (skin-to-skin)
- proximity contacts - extended close contact (within 1 to 2 metres for more than 15 minutes) with an infected individual
- travelling in a small vehicle, like a car, with an infected person

The health protection team will provide definitive advice on who must be sent home.

Household members of those contacts who are sent home do not need to self-isolate themselves unless the student or staff member who is self-isolating subsequently develops symptoms. If someone in a class or group that has been asked to self-isolate develops symptoms themselves within their 14-day isolation period they should follow '[stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#)'. They should get a test, and:

- if the test delivers a negative result, they must remain in isolation for the remainder of the 14-day isolation period. This is because they could still develop the coronavirus (COVID-19) within the remaining days
- if the test result is positive, they should inform their setting immediately, and must isolate for at least 7 days from the onset of their symptoms (which could mean the self-isolation ends before or

after the original 14-day isolation period). Their household should self-isolate for at least 14 days from when the symptomatic person first had symptoms.

**Why do you want children within a class to always sit next to or near the same person when students in a year group will share the same social space at break and lunchtime?**

If we are able to limit the number of people students have **close contact** with, it will reduce the need to require all the class to self-isolate if someone in their group becomes infected. If students maintain social distancing during their social time, this would not count as close contact, whereas sitting next to someone in a lesson would meet the definition. Sitting next to fewer people therefore reduces the chances of someone needing to self-isolate as well as making the possibility of needing to do this more than once even less likely.

**What if my child doesn't get on with the person they sit next to or that person disrupts their learning?**

Teachers give a lot of thought to seating plans to ensure students who sit next to each other are a good pairing. It is already the case that in most lessons the teacher decides where a student sits and who they work with so this will not be much of change for students.

As a result of social distancing, lessons students will work more independently and there will be more class discussion and less group work.

Students who struggle to manage their behaviour will be given additional support to use in class to help them focus but anyone who disrupts learning will be removed from the class.

Teachers will be able to email the Pastoral Team to ask for any student being disruptive to be removed from the lesson. The Pastoral Team will then work with the student who might be allowed back into their next lesson or they may have to work in Time Out. Repeat offenders will be excluded.

The membership of classes and whom students are sitting next to will be reviewed at October half term with any changes coming into effect after the break.

**My child is in the top set for Maths, will they still be challenged if there is a wider spread of ability in the class?**

Yes. Teachers will plan their lessons to ensure there is appropriate differentiation to meet the needs of all students regardless of their ability.

If parents are worried that their child is not being sufficiently challenged or supported in any subject, they should contact the class teacher or the subject leader to discuss their concerns.

**If students self-isolate, how will this affect their attendance record?**

A student not attending because they are self-isolating would be recorded as absent due to “exceptional circumstances” or present if the student joins all lessons live via MS Teams. Absence as a result of having to self-isolate would not result in prosecution for poor attendance.

**If students are self-isolating, will work be set for them to do at home and will they be able to get support from their teachers?**

Yes and Yes. Our aim is to ensure that any disruption to learning as a result of the need to self-isolate is kept to a minimum so as not to disadvantage the student.

Work will be set on-line but we will also explore ways of enabling the student to participate in lessons via MS Teams.

If a student does not have access to a computer and/or broadband at home, Walton High will provide these to ensure they are able to continue with their studies.

**If a student in Year 11 or Year 13 has to self-isolate, will exam boards take this into account?**

At the moment, the only action the school can take is to submit a request for special consideration on behalf of a student who may have been adversely affected by the need to self-isolate.

However, the exam board regulator, OfQual is currently consulting on a number of issues related to what adjustments it should make to qualifications in light of COVID-19.

Parents, and students from Y10 onwards are encouraged to respond to the survey to ensure their views are taken into consideration: [https://www.gov.uk/government/news/ofqual-launches-consultation-on-2021-exams-and-assessments?utm\\_source=e8238d66-848e-4134-aa96-115c9fa2b50b&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm\\_content=immediate](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/ofqual-launches-consultation-on-2021-exams-and-assessments?utm_source=e8238d66-848e-4134-aa96-115c9fa2b50b&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate)

**When will after school enrichment activities begin again?**

This will be kept under review and they will be reinstated as soon as possible. However, it will be difficult to introduce these for years 7 – 9 whilst there is a staggered end to the day.

It might be possible to offer some homework support sessions to small groups of students with Special Educational Needs in years 7 -9 during Session 6 and after Session 6 for students in years 10 and 11. It might also be possible for some Year 10 and Year 11 students to attend subject support sessions with other members of their class at the end of the day. Students will be advised in September if these sessions are available.

**Do Post-16 students have to stay until 16:00 if they do not have lessons?**

No. Post-16 students may go home after their last lesson or stay to use the study facilities.

**Will temperatures continue to be monitored as people enter the building?**

The thermal cameras covering the designated entrances are now permanent additions to the school's CCTV system, which will continue to monitor the temperature of everyone entering the building. If the cameras detect an elevated temperature, it activates an audio, visual and email alert. The person who triggered the alarm is required to have their temperature checked again and would only be allowed to enter the building if it reads within the normal range.

**Where will students be if they have to wait for their sibling in the morning or afternoon?**

Students will need to wait in the designated area, which, depending on numbers, is likely to be the Café or Library at both campuses.

**When will we find out if there is an additional minibus service that my children can use and what the cost is?**

Mr Singh, Walton High's Business Manager, is working on determining whether the current capacity will meet demand or whether additional minibuses will need to be sourced and drivers employed.

We had hoped to reduce the cost of each journey but having looked at this in more detail, this is not possible because to do so would result in the school having to subsidise the service by a significant amount.

Any additional drivers will need to have their driving ability assessed and all safeguarding checks completed before taking up post. To expedite this, Walton High will be contacting those who have expressed an interest in this role next week to start the process before we know whether their services are needed to ensure we are able, as far as possible, to meet all requests.

**Does my child have to use the minibus service in both the morning and afternoon or can they use it one way?**

We hope to be able to offer a one way service but accommodating students who need support with travel both to and from school will take priority in the event of demand outstripping supply.

**When will the new Y7 receive their timetables?**

Y7 will receive their timetables on the induction day in September so their Tutor can explain what the different codes mean and how the timetable works.

**Can Y7 be given a plan of the building before September so they can familiarise themselves with the layout of the building before their first day?**

Virtual tours of both campuses have been produced and all the new Year 7 should watch this before their first day. These can be found on the Year 6 Transition page of the school's website

<https://www.waltonhigh.org.uk/year-6-transition>

The layout of the classrooms in the video shows how they would have looked with social distancing and only half of students attending at any one time.

With all students attending, a typical classroom will look now like the photo below, with students sitting two to a desk.



The new Year 7 should also complete the activities in the transition booklet, one of which involves familiarising themselves with the layout of the building.

<https://www.waltonhigh.org.uk/images/transitiondocs/Year%206%20Transition%20Booklet.pdf>

**Are parents expected to wash all items of uniform every day?**

No. Good personal hygiene is very important but we recognise that it may not be possible for all families to wash their children's uniform every day or to have more than one of each item. It is clearly easier to rinse a tie through in soapy water and have it dry by the morning than a jacket. However, children should change out of their uniform when they get home and not wear it out and about more than necessary.

This recommendation is as much about protecting families from children bringing the virus home on their clothes as it is about them bringing it into school.

All uniform items should be washed at least weekly with PE kit being washed between lessons.

Parents will need to decide on the level of risk they are prepared to take within their own home.

**Can children attend school without their blazer and tie rather than having to wash them frequently?**

No. Students should continue to conform to the school's dress code.

**Will students be allowed to carry their bags with them?**

No. Items brought from home are considered by the Government to be a risk so all students, including P-16, will be required to put their bags and coats in their lockers.

**Why did the school decide that the older year groups should come in later?**

Younger students are being asked to attend earlier than the older year groups because they are more likely to be dropped off by parents on their way to work. Most parents are also more comfortable in allowing their older children to travel independently.

Research also suggests that teenagers are more receptive to studying later in the day as a result of the change to their circadian rhythms which causes them to go to want to go to sleep and get up later than younger children. Despite this, we believe that letting them sleep in until midday and beyond in term time is going too far – hence the 09:30 start.

**What guidelines will there be for children accessing their lockers for PE kit and packed lunch?**

Students will only need to access their locker to get their packed lunch or PE kit. We will explain to students on their induction day in September how this will work in a controlled and socially distanced manner

**Will lockers be arranged in year groups?**

Yes and where possible students in the same “bubble” will also have their lockers near each other.

**I would like my older child to walk to school with my younger child, will they still be able to do this with the staggered start and finish?**

If we have the space available, we would accommodate such requests and the students would wait, in a socially distanced way, with those who come by private car.

**Why are children not allowed to attend if they are coughing and/or sneezing but have tested negative for COVID-19? Will there be any allowance for children who have medical conditions such as hay fever?**

It is possible for people to receive a false negative test which means they might be infectious and therefore if they are coughing or sneezing there is a risk of them transmitting the virus to others. The current DfE guidance states:

- *if someone tests negative, if they feel well and no longer have symptoms similar to coronavirus (COVID-19), they can stop self-isolating. They could still have another virus, such as a cold or flu – in which case it is still best to avoid contact with other people until they are better.*

Hopefully, with everyone adhering strictly to the increased hygiene measures and social distancing, fewer people will contract colds, ‘flu and other viruses this winter to limit the number of students who stay at home unnecessarily.

Fortunately, when students return in September the hay fever season is over. However, where children have a known medical condition that may cause them to cough or sneeze, we will work with parents to ensure their children can attend school.

**Will Post-16 students be allowed to go to Tesco during the school day?**

No. This is to limit the number of contacts students are exposed to during the school day. Also, as a result of the social distancing measures in place, there is often a queue and long wait to get into the store and students will not have time needed.

Michelle Currie

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