



22 July 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we near the end of a long and unconventional term, we wanted to update you on our 'next steps' in our COVID-19 response and the reopening of SMCC in September.

As you know, we have remained open continuously now since February half term, including during bank holidays and school holidays to offer support to the families of key workers and vulnerable children. Our staff have worked with outstanding commitment and care under difficult circumstances, our students have adapted exceptionally to a different routine, and the support of our parents and carers has been remarkable. We will now be closing from Friday 24th July until Monday 7th September for our students, to allow everyone the rest they need in preparation for our September return. Over this break we will continue to plan for a safe return in September and of course be there for our year 11 students at results day in late August. No additional compulsory work will be set for the students over the summer, however, there is an expectation that if a student has fallen behind in work that has been set, then this is the opportunity for some catch up. More details will follow regarding this in the next few days.

As we are sure you will by now be aware, the government have announced that all school children will return to education in September. Guidance has been released for schools around what this return should involve, including a 'system of controls' endorsed by Public Health England. We have been working hard to make plans for this safe return and we will continue to do so as a senior leadership team over the coming weeks. We will release finer details around our return towards the end of the summer holidays which will hopefully give you all of the information and reassurances that you will need. For now, we just want to set out some key pieces of information which we feel are important for you to know now.

In order to reintegrate students gradually back into life at SMCC, students in Years 7, 10 and 11 will return to school on Monday 7th September, whilst students in Years 8 and 9 will join them a day later on Tuesday 8th September. Our new Year 7 students have been unable to have the time in school that they would normally have during the summer term to support their transition so we feel it necessary to allow them this time on Monday 7th, and our GCSE students in Years 10 and 11 inevitably have huge strides to make in terms of 'lost time' with their teachers. By directing our focus to these Year groups on Monday 7th, we can then welcome Years 8 and 9 back with the support they also deserve, on Tuesday 8th.

Our timetable for September will be very different to what our students have become accustomed to and we will discuss this further with students on their return. Our primary focus is to keep everyone as safe as we possibly can, whilst maintaining a broad and balanced curriculum. Students will return in Year group 'pods' which means they will rarely come into contact with students in other Year groups. This has meant 'blocking' lesson time and teaching spaces to minimise movement around the site, as well as staggering break, lunch and social times so students remain in their Year group pods. All statutory safety requirements will be in place across all areas of the school, in many cases beyond what the government has stipulated, in order for



us to have our own on-site track and trace system, should anyone within the school community be confirmed with COVID-19 at any point.

School transport arrangements are led and managed by Devon County Council (DCC) directly rather than by us as a school. We have been in close communication with DCC transport regarding travel arrangements; school transport will run as usual in September, but students may well be on buses with students in other Year groups. This is out of our control and DCC are obligated to put their own safety measures in place. Although it will not be compulsory for students on school transport to wear face coverings, this may be something you wish to consider for your child. Students travelling on public transport (i.e. the 155 bus) **must** wear face coverings in line with government ruling.

We will be limiting gatherings in school as much as possible and this means that, for the foreseeable future, we will not be running any extra-curricular clubs during lunchtimes or after school. Each year group will also have some social time within the day, this will be within their year group pod and the onus will be very much on the individual to conform to the social distancing guidance wherever possible. The canteen will be serving hot and cold food at lunchtime, but due to the nature of our staggered lunchtimes, our catering team will not be able to offer food at break time. Students will need to bring their own break time snacks should they require them. These should be healthy, with no sweets or chocolate which do not support the learning brain.

In terms of uniform, after much debate we will expect students to wear full uniform, including ties, with the only exception being that no blazers will be worn. We ask that uniform is kept freshly laundered each day, including ties, which can be put through a washing machine regularly. Our current PE kit design is no longer available from the supplier, so Mr O'Sullivan has recently been working with Daws in Barnstaple to source a new style PE kit. This is available to order now from Daws. Mr O'Sullivan will be in contact directly with more information about this. There is no requirement for current students to buy the new style PE kit; this will be phased in and when current kits become outgrown, the new style will be the only version available to purchase.

To minimise movement around site and the spread of infection, students will not have access to their lockers for the time being. All lockers have been emptied of contents, some of which are still awaiting collection from reception, and lockers will be reallocated once it is safe to do so. All students will have a 'base' classroom in September which will not be used by any other students outside of their Year group, so PE kits should be brought to and from school on the relevant days and can be left in these base rooms throughout the day when they are not needed. They should be taken home each evening to be laundered. Bags should not be left in the base rooms overnight as this will hinder the cleaning process.

In order to protect the safety of everyone within the SMCC community, it is vital that you do not send your child to school if they are presenting any symptoms of COVID-19. Please take the time to read the NHS information via the following link and if you are in any doubt, please contact reception before sending your child into school. <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/> We will be following the guidance for schools set out by Public Health England at every point, and should we be faced with a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 we will act accordingly to keep the safety of everyone our priority.

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As the summer progresses, we will be sending further details to you via email regarding our new structures and expectations. Please check your emails regularly, particularly in the final weeks of the holidays, so that no information is missed. If you have any queries, please direct these to enquiries@smcc.devon.sch.uk

On a final note, we are very sad to be saying goodbye to Mr Grose who has become a very popular member of staff and has been a great asset to our Science, Maths and A2L departments at SMCC. Mr Grose takes up a teaching post at West Buckland School from September and we wish him every success with his new role.

We wish you all a safe and restful summer and we look forward to seeing all of our students back in school in September.

Best wishes,

Keep Safe

The Senior Leadership Team at SMCC