
Oakbank School

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15th July 2020

Re: Coming Back to Oakbank!

Dear Year 9,

We are so excited to be welcoming you back to school in September, the site has looked very lonely without you all there.

As you know, from Mr Bertrand's letter, the way the school will run is going to be quite different from what you have been used to and the purpose of this letter is to give you a few basic pieces of information so that you know what you need to do in September.

The first, and most important thing to say is, don't worry! We are all going to take a few weeks to get used to our 'new way of school'. The amazing thing about Oakbank students is that they can overcome anything, and all of your teachers will work with you to support you through your return to school and the new routines we have.

The second thing, which is equally important, is that we will need to look after and respect each other's safety much more than we have ever had to before. Some of the changes and rules might feel like they are very strict - you might even feel like they have been designed to stop you from doing things you usually enjoy about school – this isn't the case. We have nearly 600 people on site, and we must keep each and every one of you as safe as we can.

Finally, please remember that we have all had different experiences over the last few months. Some of you might have found lockdown really easy, others may be less so. For many of us, lockdown has been a mix of ups and downs and what is really important is that we are there for each other and do everything we can to help each other feel safe and to celebrate how we have each coped with the challenges. And remember, you have coped!

Re-opening

We are going to re-open Oakbank slowly on the first week. Mr Bertrand has already mentioned the Academic Mentoring days to you in his letter. Please make sure you book an appointment. These meetings will be your chance to come and ask any questions and for you to tell us about where you feel you are at. The more we know, the more we can help!

Your first 'normal' day of school will be: Monday 7th September 2020

'Bubbles'

To keep you all safe, we will be splitting the site (the buildings and playgrounds) into year group bubbles. As well as this, **each year group will have its own specific entrance and exit to school and its own start time.** It is really important that these bubbles stay separate and you won't be allowed to move between areas of the school during the day. You will also find that, on some days, you might not even change classrooms – your teacher's will do all of the walking!

Your year group start time is 9.00am and you can start to arrive at school from 8.45am

Please do not arrive before this time as the gates won't be open or there may be another year group arriving at that time. We've put a lot of thought into how to get you all into school as quickly and as safely as we can, and it will only work if we all stick to the plan.

When you arrive at school, you must come in through the Back Gate (by Ryeish Green Sports Hub).

Again, you won't be able to come in through a different gate and we need to keep the different year groups separate from each other.

If you cycle to school, you should store your bike in the bike shed.

Please remember to wear a helmet and bring a bike lock with you. Unfortunately, we will not be able to use lockers but, because you won't be moving around the school as much, this shouldn't be an issue.

All of your lessons will be in H Block

As I've said already, your teachers will move around the school, but this will be your area for your lessons and no other year groups will be allowed in. You will have access to toilet and hand-washing facilities in your block and we will make sure you know how to enter and exit the building.

Your dining area will be The Canteen

In order to help keep you all safe, we will be using the Hall as a second canteen. You will be able to buy the same food at each 'canteen' but, to make it as hygienic as possible, there won't be any tables or chairs.

We will clean the canteens between each use, and we will have a different way for you to pay for your meals. If you usually bring packed lunches, I really suggest bringing it in a disposable bag. If you need to bring a lunch box, please make sure you wash it properly at the end of every day.

We have split the playground in half, and you will have access to plenty of space during breaktimes.

If the fire alarm goes, you should go to the Back Field

We will practise our arrangements for the fire alarm during the first few days back but our usual expectations of quick, calm, and quiet still apply.

A really exciting change we have made is to the timings of the day. **Every student will now have three lessons a day. These lessons will be 100 minutes long** and will provide an excellent opportunity to explore the topics and themes in your subjects. **We will also be using a two-week timetable** (we are calling them Week A and Week B) so you'll need to be even more organised. When you get your timetable in September, make sure you stick it somewhere clear!

Your school day looks like this:

8.45am	Arrive at School.
9.00am	Lesson 1
10.10am	Breaktime (Canteen)
10.30am	Lesson 1 Continued.
11.00am	Lesson 2
12.10am	Lunch (Canteen)
12.40pm	Lesson 2 Continued.
1.10pm	Lesson 3
1.50pm	Afternoon Break
2.00pm	Lesson 3 Continued
3.00pm	End of Day

As you can see, at the moment, there is no tutor time for year 9. We are looking into ways to give you access to your form tutors and Head of Year and we will update you, in September, when we have a plan - we know how important tutor time is for you!

You must arrive at school in full school uniform. We take uniform incredibly seriously at Oakbank and we want you all to look ready to learn - especially those smart shoes! If it's a day when you have PE, you should turn up to school in your PE kit, which you will wear all day. There won't be any changing facilities available, so this makes things a lot easier for you.

Finally, and really importantly, **you must bring the following equipment with you to school. For hygiene reasons**, teachers will not be allowed to lend you equipment and you won't be able to borrow things off your friends.

- Pens – black/blue, green and red
- Writing pencils, coloured pencils, a rubber and a pencil sharpener
- Small non-permanent marker pen
- Glue stick
- 30cm ruler
- Maths set (containing protractor, compass, set square)
- Scientific Calculator (For example: Casio Calculator - FX-83GTX or FX-85GTX)
- At least 2 highlighters
- Transparent pencil case

We will have a small school shop where you can buy things in an emergency but, you need to use the summer to get organised and do a back-to-school shop!

Hopefully this letter has cleared a few things up for you. If you do have any questions, please have a look at our website or feel free to email me.

Like I said, it's going to take a bit of time to get used to the new way of doing things. **We know however, that it's our amazing students and teachers that make Oakbank a fantastic school to be at and, if we all work together and stick to the plan, we will stay safe, learn and have an incredible year.**

I can't wait to see you all in September but, for now, have a great summer Holiday and look after yourselves.

Mr Smith
Head of Year 9