

Welcoming all students back in September.

We are delighted that we will soon be welcoming all our students back into school, and we hope your family has had a chance to rest over the summer. Our students worked hard during lockdown, but they missed the interaction of normal lessons and the many opportunities to socialise and learn with others that are all part of their education. I am writing to you to provide more information about arrangements for September. Heads of Years will be in touch about arrangements for the first week.

Protective bubbles for year groups

The DFE guidance (links below) about schools re-opening and advice for parents states that students should be in 'bubbles'; in a secondary school this means they should only interact with their own year group in order to reduce the risk of infection. To deliver this we have divided the school into seven separate zones or bubbles, one for each year group. Students must stay in their year zone. If we have confirmed cases of the virus in that year group, the whole year group (but not the whole school) may need to go home to isolate.

Students will be told exactly which classrooms and other areas they may use and there will be notice stands separating the areas which conform to fire regulations - in other words, they make it clear where the zones end but would not impede an emergency exit.

Students will have all their lessons except PE in their zone; for PE we have arranged safe times and routes for students to reach areas for their lessons which will include outdoor exercise.

Teachers will move around the whole school to teach their different classes; students will only move within their zone; they will be in different groups for different subjects as normal.

This means we have had to adapt our classrooms to provide specialist parts of the curriculum, since specialist rooms are not available in every zone.

There will be no whole school assemblies in the main hall; these will be held remotely, but we will hold year group assemblies.

Guidance for full opening: schools - GOV.UK

[gov.uk/backtoschool](https://www.gov.uk/backtoschool)

Health and safety in school

We have five different entrances to the school and we will be using all of them for entry and exit by students. This means two of the exits are used by two year groups so the arrival and leaving times will be staggered or students will be separated as they arrive and leave. Please see attached 'Times of the School Day' and 'Arrival and Departure Times for Main School Students'.

All classrooms contain hand sanitiser, tissues, and lidded bins for use by students and teachers will remind students of hand and respiratory hygiene - hand washing regularly is essential, particularly on arrival in school, as is covering the mouth and nose if coughing or sneezing.

Anyone who is ill must stay at home; we will emphasise this message at school and we would like you as parents to keep your child at home if you are at all concerned about their health, and, of course, take appropriate measures to get them tested. Please keep the school informed.

Classrooms will generally be arranged with desks facing forwards and the teacher will remain at the front and will not circulate among students. Students will be reminded not to share resources.

Year groups will use different toilets, and where possible, different staircases - where this isn't possible use of the stairs will be staggered.

The school has enhanced cleaning in place including regular cleaning of hard surfaces such as door-handles, banisters, and desks. Teachers will keep classrooms ventilated.

Members of the school community and coronavirus

If a member of the school community tests positive for coronavirus in school we will immediately contact the NHS and Public Health England for advice and will keep members of the school community informed about what we have been told to do in line with their advice. The advice is in the Guidance - for which I have provided the link above - in the sections headed 'Prevention' and in 'Response to any infection', sections 7,8 and 9. We will follow this advice. We have a specific designated first aid room (not the general one on Reception) to which anyone displaying symptoms will be taken. Please follow the two links below for more advice and guidance from the NHS.

[NHS England » Top NHS doctor issues advice for children](#)

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) - NHS](#)

Teaching, learning and the curriculum

We will provide the normal, full Camden School for Girls curriculum for all our students. They will experience our full teaching day, ending slightly earlier as we have shortened lunchtime. This is to enable any student who needs to take public transport to do so before the rush hour. Our curriculum will be taught by subject specialists. Lessons will be the same length as before - 40 minutes, with doubles (some triples in the sixth form) as appropriate.

Most teaching and learning will be the same as before but some more science and DT practicals will have to be demonstrations rather than hands-on work by students. Lessons will be interactive and we will use technology to enhance learning.

We hope to be able to lend out books from the library - details to follow.

If we are advised to tell a whole year group to stay at home to isolate for 14 days as a result of infections of coronavirus in the year group, we will put remote education in place for that year group. The DFE has stated that schools need to work on their remote education support and have a strong contingency plan in place by the end of September; see paragraph below. This can be found in Section 5 of the Guidance, link provided. We have already started reviewing our provision and will have our full plans in place by the end of September as required.

Extract from guidance:

'Remote education support

Where a class, group or small number of pupils need to self-isolate, or there is a local lockdown requiring pupils to remain at home, we expect schools to have the capacity to offer immediate remote education. Schools are expected to consider how to continue to improve the quality of their existing offer and have a strong contingency plan in place for remote education provision by the end of September. This planning will be particularly important to support a scenario in which the logistical challenges of remote provision are greatest, for example where large numbers of pupils are required to remain at home.'

The pastoral curriculum, catching up and support with mental health and well-being

We know that the lockdown period has been very difficult for young people, and may have caused them to feel stress, anxiety and loss of motivation. They may be worried about their own health or that of family members. In school we have access to support from CAMHS and Learning Mentors as well as our pastoral teams which consist of form tutors, Heads of Year and senior pastoral staff. Students may always raise their own concerns with us but we appreciate that they may wish to do this through you, their parents. So please contact

your child's tutor or Head of Year with any concerns you need to raise about your child's well-being.

Promoting resilience and mental health will be covered in our pastoral curriculum as we need to emphasise prevention as well as addressing specific individual issues.

Something that may be causing anxiety for students is an overwhelming sense that they have a great deal of catching up to do. Please be assured that we are working with teachers to give students the message that we will be helping them to catch up while at the same time making sure the pace of learning is right for them, and manageable. Our main aim in welcoming students back is to make them feel very comfortable, safe and happy in their school and to feel that their lessons are enjoyable and accessible to them.

As students settle in we will carefully identify their needs and find ways to help them get back to where they need to be with their learning.

Staggered entry and exit and times of the school day

We are putting these in place to minimise contact between students at the start and end of the day. Please see attached details.

If you wish to meet your child at the end of the school day please arrange a meeting place away from the school gates; we have been asked to ensure that parents do not congregate outside the school to reduce the risk of infection.

Provision of food and drink

Students will eat within their zone as we cannot allow the kind of mixing we normally have in the eating areas. Food will be available at break and lunchtime.

There will be no hot food; it will all be chilled and generally packaged, with fresh food available. Students are, of course, very welcome to bring in their own packed lunch and snacks.

Those who wish to purchase food from the school will do so through Parentpay and students will order their food in advance, it will be delivered to their zone by our catering staff. Drinking water will be available in all zones.

Students entitled to free school meals will, of course, order their food and receive it in exactly the same way as others but parents do not pay into Parentpay for this; it is free of charge.

I hope this is helpful. We will be in touch with any further detail as necessary. I hope you and your family enjoy the last few days of the summer break, and we look forward to seeing your child or children in September.

Best wishes to you all,

Elizabeth Kitcatt
Headteacher
Camden School for Girls