

24th August 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

Re: Preparing students to return to school Yr. 8-11

We are asking for your support to prepare students for their return in September. We cannot underestimate the challenge of the transition and the changes when students return.

Most students will be looking forward to seeing their friends, be relieved even, as well as being a little anxious.

As Parents you will play an important role over the next two weeks promoting a positive attitude to returning. There will be a unique transitions journey for every student. Together we need to help students manage the uncertainty and embrace the changes ahead with positivity.

All students will receive a great welcome on their return. These are some of the changes we would like you to discuss with your daughter.

- **Staggered starts and ends to school**
- **Working in bubbles i.e. seeing their year group only**
- **Remaining in the same area of the school**
- **Not sharing books and equipment**
- **No lockers**
- **Working on Teams during lessons rather than books**
- **Making sure their tablet is charged every evening ready for school the next day!**
- **Seating in class will always be facing the front/ teacher**
- **If students have a TA working with them then their TA will work online with students**
- **Staggered lunches for Yr8/10**
- **One-way system around the school**
- **Different entrances and exits at the beginning and end of school and at break**
- **Less freedom to move round the school**
- **Greater ownership of their classroom**
- **Greater opportunities for rewards and recognition**
- **Longer registration and time with the tutor group to strengthen emotional well being**

Could you also emphasise seeing the 'positives'

- **Reconnecting with friends**
- **Enjoying learning with peers and teachers**
- **Extracurricular clubs**
- **Sports and PE**
- **Accessing the library**
- **Enjoying the company of others**
- **Student leadership opportunities**
- **Getting on with GCSEs**
- **Receiving face to face teaching**

Support

It is important to promote hope and resilience, there will be ups and downs, but all things pass with support.

- Our School theme for 20/21 is **'The one who has Hope lives differently 'Pope Benedict**. We are ready and determined to ensure our community meets the challenges of 20/21. Our PSHEC theme for this term is CONNECT. Students will be working on this theme and their well being at our extended registrations every morning.
- We are ready to revert to online learning at any time if needed for a lockdown. All students have access to laptops and Wi-Fi/ dongles if needed. Staff are upskilled too. So, students will not miss out on any learning.

Over the next two weeks I would ask Parents to consider implementing the following practical steps to prepare for school

- **Reduce /Less social media time**
- **Consistent bedtimes no late nights slowly reduce time to school bedtime**
- **Earlier morning rises in preparation**
- **Reduce lie ins**
- **Regular physical exercise**
- **Bag ready equipment ready uniform ready tablet charged**
- **Reintroduce regular mealtimes as there will be less time for snacking at school**
- **Encourage contact with school friends to prepare to see one another at school**
- **Encourage daily reading and building up concentration skills**
- **Check transport routes and times**

We ended last term with students having made strong academic progress so please reassure your daughters that they are starting off the new academic year with firm formations to build on.

Students were empowered over lockdown and it will be a challenge getting used to old and new routines. For students and parents who want additional support it is available. Please contact either your daughter's Head of Year or Mrs Gilmore: Rachael.gilmore@ursulinehigh.merton.sch.uk

REMEMBER

IF YOUR DAUGHTER SHOWS ANY RESPIRATORY ILLNESS OR SIGNS OF COVID DO NOT SEND HER TO SCHOOL GET A TEST AND ENSURE IT IS NEGATIVE BEFORE RETURNING TO SCHOOL. AND LET US KNOW.

Thank you for ensuring your daughter is well prepared to return.

I look forward to welcoming back all students in September

Julia Waters

Julia Waters
Headteacher