



George Stephenson High School

Dear Year 12 parent/carer

I am writing to explain our plans for the partial re-opening of school for students in Year 12 from Monday 22nd June. We are looking forward to being able to welcome more young people back into school and while we understand that you and they may well be anxious about it, I hope the information we are sharing here will put you at ease.

Please take the time to read the information below and in the attached Guidance document carefully and please discuss our plans and our expectations as a family.

As you know we will be able to provide some face-to-face support to supplement the remote education of year 12 pupils but the government have made it clear that any onsite face-to-face sessions are intended to support and supplement the remote curriculum, not replace it. We have been told that we are able to offer face-to-face support for a quarter of the year 10 and 12 cohort at any one time.

We will also continue with our full-time provision for children of critical workers in all year groups and vulnerable pupils in all year groups and will continue to use best endeavours to support all other pupils remaining at home, making use of the available remote education support and ensuring a high quality offer.

The key principle in all this is about getting some routine for students and some face to face contact but sticking as tightly as we can to health and safety guidelines. The vast amount of time is students working at home so efforts should continue to be invested in this area to monitor and support and provide video explanations and feedback. The quality of the remote learning is still the key to good continuous learning. Sessions will be timetabled to keep contact ratios as low as possible and to reduce the possibility of social mixing on the school site and also to and from school. Students will remain in one classroom or Gym for each of their sessions and we will minimise mixing for arrival, breaks and departure. Students will be given a specific start time and school access point.

We will also need to ask for your support to make sure that children and young people do not attend if they or a member of their household has symptoms of coronavirus.

Year 12 Provision

Week Beginning 22 June and 6 July – Year 12 (option block per day)

Year 12 will get some academic support through subject specialists in each of their A level subjects. They will get a three-hour session per day (in option blocks) with their subject staff but will also get some pastoral support too on a Tuesday.

Option Block B subjects will be on a Monday, C on a Wednesday, D on a Thursday and E on a Friday. Provision will take place in A Block or the Gyms so that there is a complete separation from the priority group provision in G Block.

Guest students from Longbenton will attend the sessions here and any students taking an option at Longbenton will attend there. Sessions at Longbenton High School all start at 9.30am (*classes at LHS in italics below*).

Week Beginning 22 June

	9.00am – 12.00pm	9.15am – 12.15pm	9.30am – 12.30pm	9.45am – 12.45pm	10.00am – 1.00pm
Monday 22 June	Maths A9	English Literature 6 th Form Study Area	Sociology Gym 1 <i>CLPD at LHS (EV14) Photography at LHS (EX19)</i>		
Tuesday 23 June			<i>Further Maths at LHS (EX09)</i>		
Wednesday 24 June	PEO F3	Physics A2	<i>English Language at LHS (EX06) Spanish at LHS (EX05) Geography (LHS class) at LHS (EV02)</i>	Health and Social Care DOUBLE Award only A4	History A1
Thursday 25 June	Chemistry A1	Media A9	<i>Phil and Ethics at LHS (EX00) Biology (LHS class) at LHS (EX02/07)</i>	Health and Social Care SINGLE Award Gym 1	Sport A3
Friday 26 June	Geography A1	Business Studies Gym 1	French A2	Biology A3	Psychology A4

Week Beginning 6 July

	9.00am – 12.00pm	9.15am – 12.15pm	9.30am – 12.30pm	9.45am – 12.45pm	10.00am – 1.00pm
Monday 6 July	Maths A9	English Literature 6 th Form Study Area	Sociology Gym 1 <i>CLPD at LHS (EV14) Photography at LHS (EX19)</i>		

Tuesday 7 July			<i>Further Maths at LHS (EX09)</i>		
Wednesday 8 July	PEO F3	Physics A2	English Language A3 Spanish A5 <i>Geography (LHS class) at LHS (EV02)</i>	Health and Social Care DOUBLE Award only A4	History A1
Thursday 9 July	Chemistry A1	Media A9	Phil and Ethics A4 <i>Biology (LHS class) at LHS (EX02/07)</i>	Health and Social Care SINGLE Award Gym 1	Sport A3
Friday 10 July	Geography A1	Business Studies Gym 1	French A2	Biology A3	Psychology A4

Transport to and from school

The local Authority scholars transport have informed us they can only operate to the current timetable. Unfortunately, there is no flexibility for an alternative transport timetable to match the current "learning offer" for our students in Year 10 and Year 12 starting 15th June.

Therefore there will be no scholars' buses or the Sixth Form bus for the remainder of this term.

In light of the government's recent announcements that all passengers must wear face coverings when travelling on public transport, we therefore request all students follow these recommendations (other than those students who come under government medical exemptions :-young children/ disabled people and those respiratory conditions). Please also note that operators of school transport are requesting if students are paying by cash to have the correct fare available as no change will be returned.

We have been advised by the government to ask students to minimise the use of public transport to help to reduce the risks of transmission outside of school.

We are therefore advising parents/carers to make alternative arrangements to scholars buses with consideration for walking and cycling, as per recommendation guidance - <https://extranet.dft.gov.uk/safer-transport-campaign/schools/>.

The school has available a number of locations for students' bicycles:

- Students in G Block will access the adjacent bike shed.
- Students in A block will access the adjacent bike shed.
- Students in PE Block will access the staff car park bike shed.

Please can I remind you that social distancing measures also apply to journeys to and from school, therefore do not arrange to meet in groups to walk to and from school or congregate in groups prior to coming onto site.

What should students bring to school?

All students attending school are encouraged to bring with them a bottle of water and if they are staying in all day (in the key worker group) then a packed lunch should be brought. Please note that due to contagion, the guidance is that all water fountains are not be used, therefore it is very important to remember to bring in a bottle of water. Uniform is not required and clothes should be washed daily.

For the remainder of the summer term and for the Year 10 cohort as well as for the established key worker/vulnerable/EHCP group, students will be able to wear their own clothes although clothing that is worn should be appropriate for school. Items that are not permitted include: **vests, crop tops, short skirts or tight shorts or t-shirts with offensive slogans**. Wearing a face covering or face mask in schools or other education settings is not recommended.

Equipment: It is crucial that students come to school fully equipped and ready to learn. As it is no longer practical to ask to borrow equipment from friends or members of staff if an item is forgotten, students should bring to school two pens and a pencil.

Please ensure you bring an adequate supply of drinking water (bottled) and a snack, if you think you will need this, as catering facilities will not be available.

Student Locations and Entrances

Our students will be working in hubs throughout their stay in school, minimising any possible interaction with other students. Key Worker and Vulnerable students will continue in their current base – G Block.

Year 10 students will have access to two buildings – PE and F Block. Year 12 students will access two buildings – PE and A Block.

As a precaution, you should wash your hands before you leave home. On arrival at school there will be hand-washing and sanitising stations for the students to use. You must wash and sanitise your hands before entering the school site and also as you leave. Please also remember to avoid touching your mouth, nose and eyes at all times.

Each classroom will be assigned a toilet block. Only one student can go to the toilet at a time. Anti-bacterial soap is available in all toilets and must be used. We also suggest you use hand sanitiser when you return to the classroom. All staff and students will be advised to use a tissue or elbow if they need to cough or sneeze and use the swing bins to dispose of used tissues immediately. Spare tissues will be available in the classroom if required. At the end of your session, you must leave the school site immediately.

Behaviour and Expectations (please see attached Code of Conduct)

We expect every person in school to behave according to our three school rules “Ready, Respectful, Safe” which fully underpin the principles of this COVID-19 Code of Conduct. Behaviour that willfully undermines the safety measures that the school has put in place or risks the safety of students or staff will not be tolerated and will be dealt with via the normal school disciplinary procedures and the established sanctions system.

In order to return to school, you and your child must agree to abide by all the parameters below. If you or your child are unable to agree to each separate statement in this Code of Conduct, then your child should not return to school until social distancing measures are relaxed by the government or the school asks you to return.

Attendance

Any students who have medical conditions which classify them under the government guidelines as **'highest risk'** should remain at home until advised otherwise.

There are other complex reasons why a parent/carer may wish to keep their child at home and continue to access online learning only, such as if members of their family or household are classed as extremely clinically vulnerable. Government guidance states that it is advised that if this is the case, students should "only attend an education or childcare setting if stringent social distancing can be adhered to and, in the case of children, they are able to understand and follow those instructions. This may not be possible for very young children and older children without the capacity to adhere to the instructions on social distancing. If stringent social distancing cannot be adhered to, we do not expect those individuals to attend. They should be supported to learn or work at home".

We have conducted a stringent Risk Assessment to ensure that the school is safe for students to attend when we re-open on the 15th June. However, if you have any concerns about sending your child to school during this period and wish to keep them at home, government have said that "Parents will not be penalised if their child does not attend school. We expect schools and other relevant partners to work with and support the relevant families and pupils to return to school. Under the Coronavirus Act 2020, we have relaxed the law, so that the parent of a child of compulsory school age is not guilty of an offence on account of the child's failure to attend regularly at the school at which the child is registered (section 444 of the Education Act 1996)" due to members of the family home. Please let us know if this is the case.

Parents and carers must not send their children to school with any symptoms of illness, however mild, including fever, diarrhoea, nausea, sore throat, cough, loss of smell/taste, rashes etc. The school reserves the right to refuse entry to any student where there are legitimate concerns regarding the health of a student.

It will be the parent's responsibility to collect the child urgently where the child becomes unwell or appears unwell.

We remain required, by law, to complete daily attendance registers for the DFE. Therefore, our existing arrangements for informing the school of your child's absence from school remain applicable. Whatever the reason for absence e.g. non COVID-19 related illness, medical appointments, COVID-19 related self-isolation or shielding, or if you do not wish to send your child back to school at this point, we need parents to:

Contact the school on the first day of absence before the start of the school day to let us know the reason for the absence and the expected date of return. Parents can do this by calling: 0191 2161115, sending a text to 07841211349 or emailing us on absence@gshs.org.uk

This should be done on all occasions that you are expected in school. If a message is not received across when your child is expected to attend, we will contact you for more information simply to ensure all absences are correctly recorded.

2021 Examinations

A number of Year 10 and Year 12 students and parents have been in contact with us concerned about the GCSE and A Level exams in 2021. We are awaiting the Department for Education, Ofqual, and the exam boards to provide some guidance on how these exams will be affected or altered by this extended break in study. However, even if they do not adapt the nature and content of the exams, the exam boards use a mechanism referred to as norm referencing. This means the same proportion of grades are given out each year.

Therefore, if students do less well nationally, which is potentially likely given this break in their studies, then the marks for each grade boundary will come down to reflect this situation. Therefore, it is important students continue to engage with their home learning to ensure they are in the strongest position possible when we return to school. I hope this information provides some reassurance.

I hope this letter has provided you with a clear plan for the remainder of this term.

Our aim is for this return to school to be a reassuring and positive experience for all students. However, we appreciate this will be a strange situation for all concerned and not like a typical school experience. Staff will be available to help you follow the instructions in this letter and ensure you remain safe, but also to assist if you require additional support with your emotional wellbeing.

With very best wishes

Mr Wilkinson