



Barr Beacon School  
[www.barrbeaconschool.co.uk](http://www.barrbeaconschool.co.uk)

Our Ref: LD/DLE/cc/ Parent Letter July 2020

15<sup>th</sup> July 2020

Dear Parents / Carers

2019-2020 has certainly been a very unusual academic year! I am sure I am not the only one looking forward to getting back to something as close to normality as possible in September. This letter outlines how we are going to do this with your support.

We know it is an unavoidably long letter so we have organised it into three main parts so you can find information you need as quickly as possible:

### **Part 1: Our September return**

Our plans for how we are going to get all pupils back in the building safely and the adjustments to our normal ways of working we are making so this is possible. As it is essential that everyone is aware of these, **please read this carefully**. There will also be a video version, containing the main points, available on our website.

### **Part 2. Summer work and checking what pupils have learned at home**

We are setting work for pupils to complete over the summer to keep their brains active if they wish to. We will also share our approach to checking their learning when they get back into classrooms in September.

### **Part 3. Reminders**

We know it has been a long time since we have been operating 'normally' so this section contains some important reminders.

## **Part 1. Our September return**

All of the measures we are putting in place are to maintain year group bubbles and minimise contact between different year groups. We require **your co-operation** in making this work. **Parts where your help is most essential are highlighted in blue.**

All of these measures are in line with the government guidance which is available here <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

**This letter is written with September in mind so please remember that pupils will be a different year group to what they are now. E.g. if they are currently Year 10 then they will be Year 11 in September.**

### **First day back for Years 7, 12 and 13: Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> September**

Year 7 have had a separate letter so please check this carefully. They need to arrive by 8.40am but not earlier than 8.25am and their day will finish at 3.00pm.

Year 12 and 13 need to arrive by **10.00am** but not earlier than **9.30am**. Year 13 will finish at 12.30pm and Year 12 will finish at 1.30pm. During their day, they will have an assembly, meet their tutors and



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be issued with timetables, planners and lanyards. They also have a special PSHE lesson based on well-being and any concerns they have.

### **First day back for Years 8, 9, 10 and 11: Friday 4<sup>th</sup> September**

The first day for Years 8, 9, 10 and 11 is Friday 4<sup>th</sup> September. Years 7, 12 and 13 will also be in school. Unlike our normal day, this will have a staggered start, allowing pupils and students to get used to the new Covid-19 measures.

All pupils will enter through the top gate (Entry Point A on the map below).

	<b>Arrival Time (do not arrive more than 20 minutes before this time)</b>	<b>Departure Time</b>
Year 7	8.45	3.00
Year 8	9.15	3.10
Year 9	9.45	3.15
Year 10	10.15	3.20
Year 11	8.45	3.00
Year 12	11.30	3.00
Year 13	11.30	1.30

### **Overview of the normal school day (from Monday 7<sup>th</sup> September)**

	<b>Arrive between these times</b>	<b>Departure Time*</b>
Year 7	8.25-8.50	3.00
Year 8	8.25-8.50	3.10
Year 9	8.25-8.50	3.15
Year 10	8.25-8.50	3.20
Year 11	8.25-8.50	3.00
Year 12	Personalised individual timetables will be issued on Thursday 3 <sup>rd</sup> September	
Year 13		

*\*Unless participating in an extracurricular activity. Details below.*

For most pupils, the times of the school day are mostly unchanged. The one big change is the earliest arrival time is now 8.25am. **Pupils will not be allowed on to school site before 8.25am so please make the necessary arrangements.**

**Similarly, unless they are in an extracurricular activity, we need your assistance with getting your children home as soon as possible at the end of the school day. It is imperative that pupils do not hang around in the local community. Doing so would massively increase the risk of transmission for themselves, their families and the community as a whole. Your support with making sure your children come home after school is essential for keeping everyone safe.**

### **Entry points**

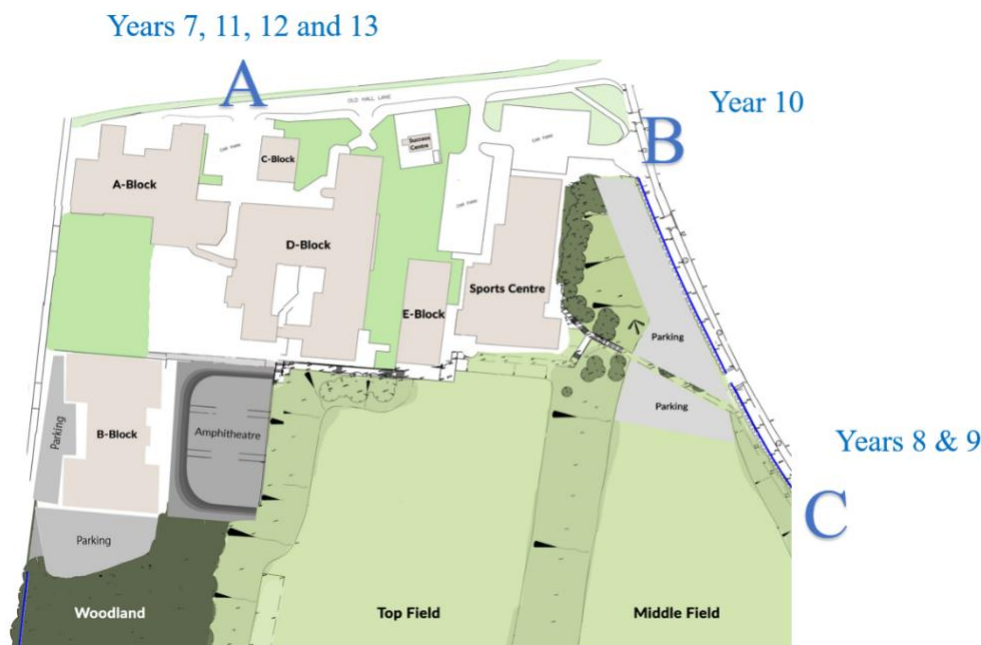
We will **not** be having a staggered start but they will need to enter the site at different locations. **Please make sure your child knows their entry point. The map below shows you where this is.**



Years 7, 11, 12 and 13 need to enter school site by the top gate (**Entry Point A** on the map) where they will be directed to sets of sinks for their year groups.

Year 10 needs to enter school site through the bus bay (**Entry Point B** on the map).

Year 8 and Year 9 need to enter school site at the bottom gate, leading from Beacon Road (**Entry Point C** on the map).



When they arrive, we will supervise all pupils washing their hands for 20 seconds, using the sinks provided.

**The government guidance makes it clear that those travelling from some distance away should use car transport rather than public transport. Please support us by dropping off and picking up your child away from the school site, not bringing cars on to school site. Of course, where possible, encourage your children to walk or cycle rather than take public transport. If your child chooses to cycle, please make sure they wear a helmet.**

### **Exiting site**

Unless pupils are catching a school bus, they must leave by the bottom gate (Entry Point C on the map).

### **School Buses**

We are liaising with the scheduling department of National Express to provide a service as close as normal as possible. However, they have made us aware that due to all schools across the whole Walsall and Birmingham having different demands, there will be some alterations. It may even involve them not being able to provide us with our usual five buses and some pupils having to take the regular public services instead. At this point, we simply do not know. National Express have said they will be able to provide us with a timetable by “late July” and we will contact you as soon as we hear from them.

Although this may change depending on the availability of buses, we would like to be able to direct pupils to specific buses to minimise mixing of bubbles. e.g. 3 year groups could be on one 705 with the other 3 years groups on another. Where we have Year 7 pupils who have to get the same bus as their older siblings we will house them in a separate waiting area in the bus bay.

## **Punctuality**

Pupils in Years 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 will be marked late if they arrive any later than 8.50am. If lots of pupils arrive at the same time, this may involve them having to queue, just as we have got used to doing at supermarkets, etc. They will not be 'late' if they are in the queue to wash their hands at 8.50am. For Year 12 and Year 13 students the same applies but their latest arrival time is 9.00.

## **Face coverings/masks**

In line with government guidance, face coverings will not be permitted to be worn on school site. Pupils using buses must use face coverings on their way to and from school. Pupils will be instructed to remove these when they arrive at school, before they wash their hands. When removing them, we will instruct them to be careful not to touch the front of their face covering as they remove them. If wearing a temporary face covering, they may place these in the bin provided. If they are using reusable coverings they need to place them in a plastic bag they can take home with them.

## **Hand sanitiser**

Although we will all be washing hands regularly and sanitising throughout the school day, **we strongly urge you to provide your child with a small, portable bottle of hand sanitiser to further reduce the risk of transmission.**

## **Go straight to period 1**

As soon as they are on school site, all pupils will go straight to their period 1 classroom where they will be greeted and registered by their period 1 teacher. We are **suspending form time** for the time being to minimise the need to move around the school. Pupils will still have at least hour of time with their form tutor during PSHE every Thursday morning.

## **Social distancing measures, including breaks and lunches**

The government describe passing briefly in a corridor as "low risk" but some of our corridors are narrower than others and we have a lot of pupils. To avoid bottlenecks, we will be staggering break times, lunch times and lesson transitions. All of this will be explained to your child when they arrive. We will be instructing pupils not to touch other pupils, in line with the government guidance.

Assemblies for whole year group 'bubbles' are permitted and will take place on your child's first day in school. Other assemblies in the coming weeks may take place over Teams, being beamed directly into pupils' classrooms or form rooms (on Thursdays).

We are only having single year groups in each lunch venue (the Main Hall and Bistro). We are working to provide the most exciting menu we can offer for both venues although this will, inevitably, not be as broad as our usual offer. Any place where people are eating is defined as a higher risk area and the government guidance stipulates that pupils must not eat facing each other without additional protective measures. Therefore, pupils in the Bistro will all be sitting in the same direction and those in the Hall will be protected from transmission by the use of transparent screens. There will be a two week rotation between the Main Hall and the Bistro menu so pupils can access the full provision fairly.

There will be particular points during the week where we need to house year groups of pupils in a large venue for a few minutes to enable another year group to exit buildings and move to their lessons. We have changed the timetable so this does not happen very often. This will be clearly explained to your child in the first day assemblies.



Our two largest buildings (D Block and B Block) already have one way systems. We will install one way systems in our other buildings as well to minimise contact.

### **Lesson duration**

Where possible, we have extended lessons so that they are around double their usual length. This will further minimise the need to move around the school. Staff will have received training on how to adjust their teaching to maintain pupils' focus for longer periods so their learning is not affected.

### **Behaviour**

Our behaviour policy has been adjusted to keep everyone safe during this unprecedented period.

There will be implications and consequences for pupils deliberately breaching the measures put in place. Some of the unacceptable behaviours are included below, although it is not possible to list every unacceptable behaviour:

- Eating and/or drinking when not permissible to do so.
- Pretending to display coronavirus symptoms.
- Making jokes about coronavirus or discussing the virus when no contextual reason to do so.
- Not disposing of a tissue in the bin or purposely not covering a cough/sneeze.
- Purposely coughing/sneezing in the direction of another pupil or staff.
- Entering any part of the school other than where they are instructed to by a member of staff.
- Not entering or leaving school site at their allocated time.
- Not bringing the required equipment. *Sharing of equipment will need to be kept to a minimum to prevent the potential spread of the virus. Please make sure your child is fully equipped for their lessons. The equipment list is unchanged (see Part 3 of this letter).*
- Moving desks or seats during the lesson without permission.
- Failing to follow a member of staff's instructions at any time.
- **Not moving directly and swiftly during any lesson transitions or other designated movement times.**

**This final point is extremely important.** If any pupil takes a less direct route to their next classroom, walks more slowly than they are capable of or waits around they will be increasing the risk for everybody and delaying the carefully timed operation of the school day.

### **Lessons**

Lessons will proceed as close to normal as possible. The obvious difference will be the teacher having to stay at the front of the classroom the whole time. There will be a yellow and black line at the front of every classroom which teachers and pupils must not cross once everyone is inside the classroom. Teachers will have been trained on how to check pupils' understanding so they can respond to their learning needs without having to move near to them. As per government guidance, classroom seating arrangements have been reorganised into rows to minimise the potential spread of the virus and this will also help teachers to read pupils' body language and identify if they need additional support.

Subjects where equipment is shared between pupils, such as sports equipment in PE and instruments in music, are adjusting their curricula to minimise disruption while also minimising risk.



## **Washing hands after sneezing**

If a pupil does sneeze into their hands during a lesson they will be permitted to wash their hands after having their planner signed by their class teacher, or use hand sanitiser which they have brought themselves. We will monitor this carefully to make sure the reasons for visiting the toilet are legitimate and not disadvantaging learning. While we are fully aware that we will be entering 'cold season' in the new term and pupils who suffer from hayfever may still be feeling the effects in September, pretending to display Covid-19 symptoms will be taken extremely seriously (see **behaviour** above).

## **If a pupil has coronavirus symptoms at home**

Do not send them in to school. They must self-isolate for at least 7 days and arrange to have a test to see if they have the virus: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/get-an-antigen-test-to-check-if-you-have-coronavirus/>

Other members of their household (including siblings) should self-isolate for 14 days from when the symptomatic person first had symptoms.

Full government guidance here

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>

Inform us immediately if your child needs to isolate by contacting [postbox@barrbeaconschool.co.uk](mailto:postbox@barrbeaconschool.co.uk)

## **Your contact details**

**It is more important than ever that we have your most up-to-date contact details, especially your mobile phone number. Please let us know if anything changes using the Essential Information Amendment Form here: <http://barrbeaconschool.co.uk/application-forms/>**

## **If a pupil demonstrates coronavirus symptoms in school time**

If a pupil demonstrates any symptoms of Covid-19, they will be directed to go to a designated area within the school where they will only be in contact with a member of staff wearing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). **If your child displays any symptoms of Covid-19 while at school, you will be contacted and you must collect them from the site immediately.** We will not be able to allow the pupil to travel home alone. First aid for any other illness or ailment will operate in the usual manner.

## **Parent/carer meetings**

To minimise transmission between people, no one will be allowed on to school site without a prior appointment.

## **Cleaning**

We have employed three additional cleaners to be on site during the school day and they will be operating constantly to disinfect surfaces and door handles, especially during transition points, such as at breaks and lunchtimes.

Where groups are moving classrooms, teachers will make sure desks are cleaned before the next class enters.

## **Extracurricular**

By keeping extracurricular clubs into year group bubbles, we will be able to offer an extensive programme to pupils. Each year group will have a personalised extracurricular schedule for the term,



which will be published on our website. The calendar will detail the day and room each club will take place in.

### **Contingency planning for outbreaks**

Should the worst happen and a local lockdown is mandated by the government, or particular classes or small groups of pupils need to self-isolate, we will be setting work to complete at home which mirrors the in-school curriculum.

## **Part 2. Summer work and checking what pupils have learned**

We know that many pupils have been working diligently at home throughout the lockdown period, but not all. There are some legitimate reasons for this, including access to technology. However much work your child has completed, I just want to take this opportunity to thank you for all of your encouragement: I know it has not always been easy to cajole your children into doing work at home, especially when you have been having to deal many other challenges over this period. And thank you to all parents/carers who provided us with feedback on the work we have set, which has been overwhelmingly positive.

However much work your child has completed at home so far, we know that many will want to keep their brains ticking over during the summer. That is why we have set some activities for each subject for this period. This optional work has been designed so that pupils can make a strong start to their in-school studies in September. All work is in the usual place we have been using throughout lockdown: <http://barrbeaconschool.co.uk/working-at-home/>. Please note that, where teachers have asked for pupils to email them work, your child should do this, but be aware that teachers may not reply until we restart school in September.

We know from our pupil survey that some pupils are concerned that they will have **'lost' learning**, even if they have been doing a lot of work at home. Rest assured that we have plans in place to check what pupils have and have not been able to keep in their long-term memories. This will take place in lessons themselves with teachers using verbal questioning, quizzing and written quizzes to thoroughly check where knowledge is secure and where we might need to adjust our teaching plans.

Pupils in Years 10, 11 and 13 will also be attempting exam-style questions in the first few weeks of the new term. The aim is not to grade pupils but to use the outcomes to support them in succeeding in their qualifications.

In the new term, we will have a team of ten graduate coaches who will be working with pupils most in need of extra support.

Our science department has prepared a wonderful Summer of Science to keep everyone entertained during the six weeks. Explore the wild on a safari, visit an aquarium or science museum, train to be an astronaut, build machines... there are 27 different exciting sites to explore!  
<https://padlet.com/BBSscience/SummerScience>

### **Reading**

We would like to encourage all children to continue to read regularly during the holidays as it is well known that regular reading can advance a child's progress by up to one year! In addition to this, reading, for many children, is a great way of maintaining a healthy mindset – as it gives us all somewhere to go in our minds even if we cannot get there in person. Happy reading!



## Part 3. Reminders

### **Communications**

All communication with parents is published on our school website and it is worthwhile checking the website at least once a week as there have been many exciting events, trips and performances that have taken place that have been highlighted there. There are already more than 2,200 followers on Twitter so if you are a Twitter user remember to join us at @barrbeaconsch

Please also note our school postbox address is [postbox@barrbeaconschool.co.uk](mailto:postbox@barrbeaconschool.co.uk)

Do not forget to go to the school website and read the summer edition of our newsletter. It is published every half term and all copies are available to read on the website.

### **Uniform**

As you are aware, we are very determined to maintain the high standards of uniform with all of our pupils and I thank so many of you for your continued support. We expect that all pupils are looking smart in September and abiding by the school's uniform code. More information regarding school uniform can be accessed on the school website: <http://www.barrbeaconschool.co.uk/uniform/>

- Black school trousers not leggings, jeggings or roll on tight trousers
- No extreme hair fashions – brightly coloured, dyed hair, no celebrity or iconic youth hair styles. Shaved heads (full or partial) and shaved eyebrows are not permitted.
- Key Stage 3 pupils are not permitted to wear any make-up. Pupils in Key Stage 4 are permitted to wear discreet make-up
- No body piercing is allowed other than one, single, plain gold or silver stud in each ear lobe which must be removed during PE activities. Other jewellery is not permitted
- False nails/eyelashes and nail polish are not permitted
- Correct black, polished, leather school shoes must be worn – see school website for examples
- Permitted religious items (e.g. Kara) must be of a reasonable cost and plain

Your support in maintaining our high standards is greatly appreciated. As stated in the school prospectus **'the Headteacher's decision will be final in all matters relating to uniform, jewellery and hairstyle'**.

### **Sixth Form Dress Code**

Please follow the link with regards Sixth Form Dress Code:  
<http://barrbeaconschool.co.uk/dress-code>

### **Equipment**

All pupils need a school bag that will hold an A4 folder. Please do not allow your child to have a large handbag for school. Pupils also need to have a pencil case with pens **including a green pen**, pencils, a ruler, a rubber, a pair of compass, a protractor and a scientific calculator. Most of this equipment is available to buy from the school shop. Please can we ask that your child does not bring scissors into school as these will be provided by staff where necessary.





## **Mobile Phones**

Barr Beacon School is a no mobile phone school for Years 7 – 11. If a pupil is found with a mobile phone, this will be confiscated. Please see the E-Safety and child Safeguarding Policies on the school website.

Please note that Barr Beacon School has the power to search without consent and will **not tolerate any prohibited items** being brought into school.

Our most recent letter about mobile phones is [HERE](#).

## **Attendance and Punctuality**

Whilst our attendance is one of the best in the Midlands, some parents take their child from school to take them on holiday during term time. A week's holiday is 25 hours of lost learning time for your child. Be aware that the Education Welfare Service **will** issue a fixed penalty notice and Government legislation states that if the fine is not paid within 21 days the fine will increase. Further failure to pay can result in a court appearance. Although the government suspended fining in the summer term, this will be back to normal from September.

## **Free School Meals**

If you believe that your child is entitled to free school meal, please make an online application using Link 2 ICT where you will receive instant notification to confirm if your child can access the advantages in school: <http://www.barrbeaconschool.co.uk/fsm/>

## **Prescribed Medication**

If your child needs to take prescribed medication please ensure that you have signed it in at the Reception desk. The forms are available under the Publications tab on the school website. Click on the Application forms section to download the form. The form is also available from the school Reception.

## **Parent Parking**

Parent parking will be even more limited from September due to the Covid-19 measures described in Part 1 of this letter. Where parking *is* possible, please do not park dangerously i.e. on pavements, double yellow lines in the school's Sports Hall car park or on a junction of local roads. Cars regularly park on the double yellow lines on Old Hall Lane and have been observed reversing back down Old Hall Lane. Parents who park on Beacon Road, opposite the school, are expecting their child to cross a **very busy** main road rather than walking to cross safely at the pedestrian crossing.

It is more important than ever **NOT** to enter the school car park by the Sports Hall, where the school buses drop off and pick up pupils, nor park outside the gates of this car park at the start and end of the school day. It is dangerous for our children when parents are driving their cars into the car park to pick up children and the risk to children when parents are manoeuvring their cars is significant. Where a car is absolutely necessary, I would ask that parents arrange a safe place for their children to meet them for transport home that does not require parents to park in or near the Sports Hall car park.

**PLEASE PARK SENSIBLY AND THOUGHTFULLY** as our children are at risk.



## Stay safe over the summer

Please reinforce the messages that we regularly give to all pupils about “staying safe”. This includes staying safe in the sun (when we get some!) and when taking part in any activities. We have also reminded all pupils to stay safe, not just in the local community but also online. Please see the school website for e-safety information we update regularly as soon as new threats are identified.

If the government change any plans, we will communicate with you as soon as possible.

I hope you all have a great summer and thank you for all of your support during this unusual academic year.

Yours sincerely



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