

Date: 16 July 2020



ST HILDA'S
CE HIGH SCHOOL

WISDOM
HOPE
COMMUNITY
DIGNITY
EQUALITY

Dear parent and carer,

I wanted to write to tell you that we are working on our plans to open to all of our year groups in September. We are currently creating year group zones for each year group to have their lessons in, with use of specialist rooms too for subjects such as IT, music, art and technology. As you will appreciate, this is an intricate piece of planning and I am not ready to share the information about which rooms and areas yet.

BUBBLES AND ZONES

I have split the school into year group bubbles across all year groups, with a separate bubble for years 12 and 13 together. We will be asking our students to return via different entrances in September and all of this information will be shared with both you and your son and daughter very shortly and once again before we return, just in case of any changes. There are a few changes to our first week back as we need to make sure that all students understand the changes and have their induction before we can all start back properly on Monday 7th September. All students will have an induction which includes a welcome back assembly, time with their form and the changes we have put into place. Please note that all students will need their own equipment; a pencil case, pencil, glue stick, eraser, green pen, black or blue pen etc., including the requirements sent by the maths department.

INDUCTION TIMES

YEAR GROUP	INDUCTION SESSION	TEACHING BEGINS
Year7	All day Thursday 3rd September	Friday 4th September all day
Year8	9.00 am – 11.30 am Friday 4th September	Monday 7th September
Year9	9.00 am – 11.30 am Thursday 3rd September	Monday 7th September
Year10	12.30 pm – 2.30 pm Friday 4th September	Monday 7th September
Year11	12.30 pm – 2.30 pm Thursday 3rd September	Friday 4th September all day
Year 12	12.30 pm – 2.30 pm Wednesday 2nd September	Monday 7th September
Year 13	9.00 am – 11.30 am Wednesday 2nd September	Thursday & Friday all day

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I recognise that this is a change to the planned return date, but a lot has changed since we put those dates into the calendar. The idea of an induction for students is to calm any nerves about returning and for them to understand the changes in the building, such as the one-way system and lunches and breaks.

THE SCHOOL DAY

Our current plans have the same start time as usual. There will be a staggered end to the day and I will share the plans with you very shortly, but we anticipate these being no more than 15 minutes. I have sent a survey to ask about travel arrangements. As you know, Government advice is still to avoid public transport where possible. Please complete the survey and return it by the deadline. It allows me to see the impact of reduced numbers allowed on public transport and the impact on start and finish times.

THE CURRICULUM

We intend to run the full curriculum we had hoped to prior to March 20th. Students in years 9-13 will have their full range of option subjects. There will be limited setting in a few subjects in year 8, but with the flexibility for students to move sets easily. Year 7 will be taught in form groups and we will review this at a late date. Our priority is for students to return to us and not to be worrying about any gaps. We will work through what we need to do once we know where students are.

END OF YEAR REPORTS

I am not sending an end of year report. I can only report on attendance up to March 20th and each student has either had a face-to-face (in person or via Zoom) or a phone call to discuss their progress. We will be holding a whole-school review day on **Thursday 22nd October** where you will 'meet' with your son or daughter's form tutor to look at progress and next steps. This seems a better way to report once we know and understand what support they need. We will conduct this review day virtually unless things change. Students will not be in school on this day.

I know that it has been a strange time for us all. We have adapted to a new way of life and learning, but I need to thank you for all of your support and kind words. Seeing our years 10 and 12 in school for lessons, welcoming our key worker and vulnerable students back, meeting some of our new year 7 students on their tours, interviewing our next generation of school leaders in house captain and college president interviews has really been extra special. I never needed reminding how privileged I am to have this very special job and how proud I am of our students and all of our staff; teaching and support, but it has absolutely confirmed that our St Hilda's Family is something very, very special.

As a parent I have shared your frustrations with home schooling, I share anxieties about sending my son back to school, but our children need to be with other children and I trust that his school has planned and prepared as well as we have. Listening to the chatter and laughter of the students is a stark reminder of how the social side of school is so important.

A poem was sent to me and it really struck a chord; how can you lose something you never had?

THE LOST LEARNING

*It's all about perspective.
You speak of the 'lost' learning.
But how can we lose what we didn't possess?
The things that didn't happen?*

Continued overleaf...

*You did learn, but differently.
About different things... in difficult times.
You learnt to bake a cake when you might've practised algebra.
You learnt to enjoy the quiet of your own mind when you could've conquered adverbial phrases.
The subtle modal verb... the infinite possibilities!
You WERE learning... just differently.
When we wake up, we do not say we 'lost' the chance to brush our teeth because we ate breakfast first.
We just brush them next.
Because that's the logical thing to do.
It builds on what came before...
As educators, we will do the same.
Entrusted with the precious minds of our children, how could we do anything but?
We will assess the facts, gauge requirement and move learning forward.
Delicately... like fine brushstrokes.
Until a masterpiece emerges...
You can't stop learning from happening.
It is older than schools, more primitive than education.
It is organic and goes on without us...
Please don't dwell on what didn't happen... nothing was lost.
What did you gain?*

I will be in touch very soon with the logistics of the September return and want to thank you all for hard work as home educators while juggling your own jobs and other responsibilities. We continue to pray for you and your families and a time where we can live without the shadow of Covid-19 over us. As always, let me know if you need any further information once you have received the logistics for September.

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