



MIDDLEWICH HIGH SCHOOL

HEIDI THURLAND BA (HONS 1ST CLASS) NPQH HEADTEACHER

Dear families,

I hope that all of you have enjoyed some summer sunshine and relaxation together as a family. I wrote to you at the end of term to share our plans for reopening in September and told you that I would write again before the end of August to update you in line with any changed guidance from PHE/the DfE. I have carefully reviewed the guidance and I am delighted to inform you that we will be opening fully in September. I intend to continue with the plans previously shared with some minor adjustments which I will outline now.

The statutory expectations for schools remain in place with regard to hygiene, test and trace and response to infection. Our plans fully meet all statutory requirements as identified in the end of term letter in July.

Social distancing & Hygiene - MHS Specific Planning:

- Students will be taught in year group 'bubbles'. Students will spend their social times in their bubbles within zoned areas of the school. Students will move in zones in the school which will minimise movement around school or between students
- We have designated toilet areas to Year groups for their use
- Handwashing/sanitiser will be a regular part of our daily routine. Sanitiser stations are in place at every classroom and social space
- Staff will socially distance from each other and from students, wearing PPE where appropriate; we will adapt our teaching to ensure we can still provide quality feedback to students and support students in class. Seating arrangements will be in rows – the majority of our classrooms are already set up in this way in any case
- We will operate a split lunch to reduce pressure on spaces at social time
- **Yr7 will arrive from 8.30am; all other year groups will arrive at 8.37-40.** Students will only be allowed on site at these times and should try to manage their arrival to ensure this is the case. Students must not congregate around the school site or in the community prior to or after school. We must remember our obligation to keep all our community safe during this time.
- We will continue to run a breakfast and homework club however this **MUST** be booked in advance, we only have limited spaces and we will prioritise students who use **public** transport in the first instance (not dedicated school bus transport). If you require a place in the breakfast club *please email admin to secure this*. Please be aware we have limited places and it will be on a first come first served/priority basis. Breakfast club will run from 8.00-8.40, homework club runs from 15.00-15.45
- All year groups have identified entrances and exits to use.
- We will stagger the exit at the end of the day to ensure safe movement off site. Yrs11, 10 & 9 will leave at 15.00 with Yrs 7 & 8 leaving between 15.03-15.05 pm. We are using dedicated exits from school which will enable us to move students quickly and efficiently off site. We reserve the right to delay a year group moving/revise timings if we feel there is any risk to safety.

- Students who use the school bus can do so as normal. It is a legal requirement to wear a mask on public transport, **it is an expectation that students wear masks on dedicated school transport**. Please ensure that your child has a reusable face mask to wear on the bus. They will have a dedicated seat and will be expected to sanitise hands on entry and exit. We will carefully manage students off/onto the school site/bus. Once students arrive they must go to their dedicated entrance to school. This will be clearly signed.
- **Please do NOT bring bikes or scooters to school as this will compromise student zones (we will review this at the end of September)**
- ICT classrooms will have antiviral wipes and sanitiser available for keyboards to be wiped down prior to and after use, this will help reassure students that their safety is a priority. We will apply the same measures to PE and Performing Arts for practical equipment.
- The first week of school will be carefully managed to ensure we safely induct all students to school. We have included the induction programme with this letter.

Curriculum - As stated previously we intend to deliver as full a curriculum as possible for all students with no plans to remove or reduce GCSE qualifications at KS4. We have adapted our Performing Arts, PE, Science and Creative curriculum in line with PHE guidance and the operational management of the site. We will continue to review the KS4 qualification offer – notably Yr11 as we move through the Autumn term to take account of any further disruption to an individual or cohort and act appropriately. We have adapted our planning so that September is focused on ‘reconnecting’ students with the curriculum. During this initial period we will ensure that we carefully assess student understanding using a range of methods so that we can address gaps in knowledge and accelerate student progress. Our initial induction programme will also support student welfare in order to facilitate a successful return to school.

Uniform - The DfE has stated that school uniform provides the school community with a sense of unity setting clear standards and expectations. They have also stated that school uniform **does not require washing with greater frequency or differently** to other clothing. We are not asking families to wash uniform on a daily basis, continue with your usual frequency. Therefore in accordance with their advice all students will be expected to wear full school uniform in September. All students who have purchased the new school uniform will be given their new tie on their first day in school with us. New uniform is compulsory for **new** intake Yr7 students, all other students can continue to wear the previous uniform. If you need to replace the old uniform please contact our admin team as we may have some stock that you can utilise. If you wish to ask for advice on uniform please contact Mr Edwards for more information.

Please be aware that due to restrictions with use of changing areas for **PE on the days that students have PE they must attend school in their PE kit**. This small adaptation to our uniform expectations enables us to offer a PE curriculum that we would otherwise be unable to offer.

Lockers - A key part of the guidance is that schools minimise contact points wherever possible, therefore lockers will **not** be used during the Autumn Term/while COVID 19 restrictions apply. Current students will be able to empty their lockers in their first induction day, if it is not emptied by the end of the induction week we will remove and dispose of items that have been left. There will be no charge for lockers this year as a result.

Payments – for the foreseeable future we are not able to take cash payments of any kind in school. This means students will not be able to add money to their accounts in the canteen. Please make all payments online. If you need any help with this please contact our finance team and they will support you. We do not envisage running any trips or visits in the Autumn term therefore payments will mainly relate to canteen use.

Bubble Zones – we believe the safest way to manage our site in September is to apply bubbles to year groups. We will review this throughout the term in line with DfE/PHE guidance and we will move to students accessing their normal rooms as soon as it is safe to do so, we will write to you to update you with any changes. Student zones are shown in the table below:

Year Group	Zone	Allocated Toilets	Identified Entrance (8.30 for Yr7 all others 8.37-8.40)
7	Y7 – 16, 1, 2, 3, 4 & 6 (English)	Canteen & Exam Office Toilets	Drama Studio
8	10, 11, 12, 13, 14 & 15 (Maths/MFL)	Canteen & Exam Office Toilets	Drama Studio
9	7, 9, 19, 20, Conference Room & part Drama Studio (Humanities)	Drama Studio & Conference Room Toilets	Reception side gate
10	Ar1, Ar2, DT1, 17, 25 & 5 (Technology)	New DT Toilets	Arches Gates
11	Sc1-6 (Science Block)	PE Changing Rooms	Science Gates
SEND Resource Provision	Resource Provision & Room 22	Science	As per yr group entrance *disabled access is via the new main reception area

Social time will be maintained in bubble groups Food distribution points will be in place for all year groups allowing them to access hot snacks/food and sandwiches/drinks. Yr11 will have the opportunity to pre-order their morning break which will then be distributed in their social area.

Wet breaks will be managed within form rooms/zoned areas – we will inform students of these arrangements as appropriate.

Social Time	Time	Yr Group	Area
Morning Break	10.45-11.00	All	7 - Canteen 8 - Sportshall 9 – Drama Studio/Yard 10 – DT1 Yard 11 – Tennis Courts
Lunch A	13.00-13.30	7 11	Canteen Arches/Sci Yard

Social Time	Time	Yr Group	Area
Lunch B	13.30-14.00	8	Sci Yard
		9	Drama Studio / Yard
		10	Canteen

Attendance – The DfE have made it clear that attendance at school is mandatory. Students should be in school unless they are isolating as a result of a positive COVID19 test for themselves or a member of their household. Our attendance team will monitor attendance carefully and work closely with families to support all students into school.

Face Masks – There is significant debate around compulsory wearing of masks in schools. At MHS we have carefully considered all the guidance and our position is as follows:

- Masks **MUST** be worn if a student is using public/dedicated school transport i.e. school bus/taxi
- Masks should be removed prior to entry, ideally students should use reusable masks (cost effective and environmentally friendly). We ask that if a student wears a mask to school when they remove it at the school gate it is placed in a plastic bag, preferably reusable and one that can be zipped/closed. Students will then need to sanitise their hands immediately. Disposable masks should be immediately disposed in the bins that are available at the entrance to school.
- Staff may be wearing PPE in school depending on their role, all staff have access to face visors so that they can continue to communicate effectively whilst wearing PPE.

Wearing a mask inhibits conversation which could impact on student learning, can provide a false sense of security which can lead to less safe/careful behaviour and is also uncomfortable for long periods. We will of course continue to monitor PHE/DfE advice and will apply any changes to this with immediacy. If you are anxious about this issue please do not hesitate to contact Mr Edwards regarding this.

Cleaning – We have increased the frequency of cleaning so that this happens throughout the day and also at the end of each day. There is a clear schedule of cleaning with clear expectations for the required standards which must be met. We will rigorously monitor cleaning daily.

Test & Trace – If a student or member of staff presents with COVID19 symptoms we have a clear set of actions which will result in first aid support, immediate isolation, contact with family and application of PHE guidance specific to the context. If a member of your household develops symptoms please **do not** send your child to school. We will ask that you have taken medical advice before your child returns to school which may include testing. We will deal with each situation on a case by case basis acting on PHE advice in every instance.

Safe Behaviour in School – Our standards and expectations have not changed and we continue to adhere to our values of being safe, ready, resilient and respectful. It is essential that all students understand the importance of calm, safe behaviour in school. Students must not make physical contact with each other, must not share equipment/food etc should certainly not engage in boisterous behaviour i.e. chasing/pushing or attempting to go into other 'bubble' areas. We must work together to ensure our community is safe, we expect parental / family support if there are any

concerns over student safety. I am confident that our students do understand the seriousness of this situation and I have no doubts that we will work together to ensure we look after each other. We have a very happy, caring school and I am keen for this ethos to continue.

Equipment – students are expected to bring their own equipment to school and a reading book (this will be an essential part of their daily curriculum). Minimum equipment required is as follows:

Black/blue biro, green pen (to support assessment & feedback), ruler, rubber, scientific calculator, pencil case (needed to secure equipment), highlighter, pencil sharpener, glue stick

Induction Phase 1st – 7th Sept – In order to ensure that all students and staff return safely and fully understand how to operate in a COVID secure school we are running a phased induction at the start of term. This plan was released at the end of term and has not changed. This means that in the first week we will have reduced year groups onsite at any one time (see the table for specific days). All students will attend full time from the 8th of September, Year 7 attend full time from the 2nd September. Students who are *not on site* will access their classwork via:

- Yr11 – google classrooms; Yrs 8-10 – show my homework

At the end of term we trialed the use of google classrooms with Yr10 (now Yr11) so they have some familiarity with this, other year groups have not yet used this so will continue to access show my homework during this week. In the induction programme we have scheduled training for students and for staff on google classrooms we will also send a guide home to parents in the first week of term. From the 8th of September ALL our online learning including homework will then move to google classrooms. Whilst we will endeavour to ensure that students are in school full time we have a responsibility to have a contingency plan in place should we be affected by any further closures be they full/partial due to COVID. We have invested in google classrooms to ensure that whatever happens we can continue to deliver high quality curriculum/learning in the event students need to work from home. The school bus will run as normal during the induction week. Students will be in their form groups for the induction programme.

Timetables will be 'live' for parents/families to view in the parent portal/show my homework on the 2nd September. Work will be set according to their timetabled lessons when they are off site in the induction week.

September Student & Staff Induction Timetable: (Please read carefully)

Day	Focus	Yr Group Attending (ON SITE)	Home Learning (NOT on site)
Tuesday 1st Sept	Staff Induction & Planning	N/A	N/A
Wednesday 2nd Sept	Induction - Pastoral	Yr7	Yrs 8-11
Thursday 3rd Sept	Induction - Pastoral Induction/Google Classrooms	Yr7 Yr11	Yrs 8,9,10
Friday 4th Sept	Transition Induction/Google Classrooms	Yr7 Yr8 Yr10	Yrs 9,11

Day	Focus	Yr Group Attending (ON SITE)	Home Learning (NOT on site)
Monday 7th Sept	Transition Induction/Google Classrooms	Yr7 Yr9 Yr11	Yrs 8,10
Tuesday 8th Sept – onwards	Re-connect Phase/curriculum delivery	All	N/A

As with all our planning, we are subject to stringent checks of our risk assessment and we will of course adapt to the most up to date DfE & PHE guidance.

To summarise, we continue to be guided by Public Health England (or relevant body), the Local Authority and the Department for Education. We aim to provide as 'normal' a school experience as possible for all students. We have invested in ICT infrastructure to support home learning should it be required at any point in the future, all students will receive training on this as part of their induction in September.

In conclusion I am really excited about the start of the school year – it feels liberating to be returning to a 'new normal'. My staff and I have missed our happy, caring and vibrant school community and although we will return with a slightly different set-up our smiles, hearts and ambitions are just as big and we cannot wait to start working with you all again.

Best wishes,



Heidi Thurland
Headteacher
Excellence in Learning – Achievement for All

Useful Emails:

- Admin Team: admin@middlewichhigh.cheshire.sch.uk
- Finance Team: finance@middlewichhigh.cheshire.sch.uk
- Mr Edwards: medwards@middlewichhigh.cheshire.sch.uk

Back to school DfE advice:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>