



08 March 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

RETURN TO SCHOOL

I am writing to share with you the details for the students' return to school on Wednesday 10th March. The key priority for our return has not changed; the safety of the whole school community is paramount and full details of how we are considering every safety aspect can be found in our risk assessment on the website. The pre-testing of students before a full return to school has helped us ensure the site is as safe as possible and we are extremely grateful to parents/carers and students for engaging in this process. The vast majority of students have taken part in the testing schedule and, from Wednesday, we will set up a small testing station on site in case any students were unable to attend. This pre-testing routine will ensure students can learn without interruption.

It is important to us that students feel supported as they return to face to face learning after a considerable time away from school. With that in mind we have put in place systems and procedures that keep students safe and enable us to maximise learning time. Inevitably there will be some changes but we have tried to keep these to a minimum. Where we have done so, it is either as a safety precaution or to improve the student experience. Below is information to help students understand the routines we have put in place.

Arrival at school

Students should remain outside in their social bubble areas until the warning bell goes at 8.43 am. This is the bell that prompts students to make their way to Registration so they can arrive on time. The social bubble areas have not changed from before Christmas:

- Year 7s are based in and around the JMB building.
- Year 8s are based in the Arts and Expressive Arts area.
- Year 9s are based in the middle section outside the Sports Hall (Ashmoor).
- Year 10s are based in the large area outside the English and maths building.
- Year 11s are based towards the back of school in and around the 'rock'.
- Atrium students are based in the Atrium but are free to socialise in the social areas of their respective year groups.
- Sixth form students are based in and around the sixth form area.

Unfortunately, the weather is due to break on Wednesday and it appears that we may get some rain. Please ensure students have clothing suitable for the weather if they should arrive early.

Registration

Registration is at 8.45 am and students should be in their tutor rooms at this time. In a change to procedures from before Christmas, students will now go directly to the classroom belonging to their tutor (ie the tutor's teaching room). Government guidelines now suggest that groups of no more than one class should be together at a time and therefore we are moving from the bubble system we used before Christmas to a system reliant upon students using the one way system to make their own way around school. Students will be given a 'walk-through' to remind them of the one-way system during Wednesday morning. Please find attached a list of the new tutor rooms.

Wednesday 10th March

After Registration on the first day, students will have two lessons with their tutor. This session will ensure students are settled back into school routines and will include a safety briefing with site walk-through, relationship building activities, celebration and recognition of students' work and effort in lockdown, well-being support and assemblies. Expectations will also be made clear to the students at this time with a focus on making the most of every minute in the classroom. Lesson 3 and 4 will be 'normal' lessons and then lesson 5 will be another collapsed session on well-being and mental health. The following day, Thursday 11th March, the day will run as normal, with Registration and five lessons.

Cont/d ...

Safety measures

In line with government directives, it is strongly recommended that students wear face masks at all times unless eating or drinking. Students will also be encouraged to wash their hands often and be required to use hand sanitiser on entry to a classroom. As before, if your child is exempt from wearing a face mask or using hand sanitiser, they will not need to provide evidence and we will carry on the same system as before Christmas to support these students. If you have any questions please contact your child's Year Leader. Classrooms will be well ventilated so it is important that students are warm and bring an extra layer to wear under blazers. We will be reminding students of the need to socially distance and we are grateful for your support in reinforcing these key messages. I understand that there will be a great deal of excitement at seeing friends they might not have seen for a long time, but it is really important that we maintain high levels of safety precautions.

Teaching and learning

Many parents and students commented that a positive aspect of remote learning (technical issues aside) was the ability to learn without interruption. If nothing else, lockdown and home schooling has taught us all the importance and benefits of accessing face to face learning and we fully intend to maximise on lessons learnt. In order to support students with the same routine as they are used to having at home for remote learning sessions, to avoid excessive change and to raise expectations, we are going to continue with the same lesson structure that students have been used to over the last two and a half months. By having the same parts to a lesson, students, we hope, will feel comfortable with the expectations, therefore feeling more secure in returning to face to face learning, and also ensuring the best progress. I have attached a leaflet outlining what learning in the classroom will look like for students and teachers and why we are doing it. It is an approach that many of the best schools in the country have taken and we have modified ours to build on the positive relationships we feel are so important at our school.

Buses

Students are required to wear a mask on the buses and hand sanitise as they get on and off the bus. There is no change to this. Students will not be held in their 'pods' at the end of the day but will be given the responsibility to make their own way to the buses under staff supervision. We would encourage all students to check they have their bus pass prior to travelling on Wednesday morning. The Local Authority are still implementing a 'no pass, no travel' system.

Reception and visits to site

Parents/Carers are politely asked not to visit site, unless expressly invited to do so, but instead to phone or email Reception. Reception will continue to be located in the Atrium. Students will not be allowed to enter via this entrance but should access the building via the side door (right hand side is the entrance, left hand side is the exit).

Lates

It is so important that learning time is maximised and therefore we expect students to arrive on time to every lesson, ready to learn. With respect to morning Registrations, students arriving after the second bell (8.45 am) will be marked as late and will need to register at the 'late arrival' area (old SDCC main Reception). Students will be asked the reason for arriving late. Students who arrive late on two occasions in the same week, will be expected to attend a detention during Break two and parents will be informed. Exceptional circumstances will always be taken into account when speaking to students.

Medical procedures

There are no changes to the medical procedures. Students will continue to access the medical room using the one-way systems. Parents/Carers will be requested to collect their son/daughter from main Reception (Atrium) if they are not well enough to stay at school.

Breakfast provision

There is the opportunity for students to access a free breakfast club, The Beehive. The club is run every morning in its own room on the school site. We plan to re-open this provision when students return to school on Wednesday 10th March. The Beehive is open from 8.00 am - 8.35 am. Due to current guidelines minimising the risk of Coronavirus transmission, we will run a 'grab and go' system within these times until further notice. If you have any questions please email Mrs Murray at cmurray@southdartmoor.devon.sch.uk.

Year 7 Year Leader

Mrs Matthews will not be available on our return for several weeks as she supports her family through her

husband's serious operation. Mrs Purdy will be able to provide any support you may need and she can be contacted at rpurdy@southdartmoor.devon.sch.uk . Mr Vile will also be available to answer any questions dvile@southdartmoor.devon.sch.uk . Please also make use of your child's tutor, who will be happy to help.

Asymptomatic testing for children at home

One in three people with coronavirus do not have symptoms but can still pass it on to others. Regular testing of people without symptoms is important to help stop the virus spreading and protect your loved ones. As lockdown restrictions gradually ease we all need to play our part to help protect each other. Undertaking regular, rapid COVID-19 testing helps reduce transmission of the virus. We will be communicating shortly to all parents regarding the process for home testing using Lateral Flow tests (LFD). We are currently awaiting our delivery of LFD kits.

Students with exams this year

More information will be released shortly, once finalised, as to the schools' and Trust's approach to the awarding of grades this summer. In the meantime, exam students are encouraged to make every minute of every lesson count and take every available opportunity to demonstrate what they are capable of. Teachers will be working with students to enable them to do so, matching their levels of work to ensure that the grades awarded represent each student's capability and supporting them in the next phase of their educational journey, be that into the Sixth Form at SDCC and the Atrium, college or university.

Kind regards



Mrs J Veal
Executive Head teacher

Truth Respect Equality Excellence



South Dartmoor Community College & Atrium Studio School is part of the Westcountry Schools Trust which is a Limited Company registered in England and Wales. Company Number: 07398467. Registered address: Harford Road, Ivybridge, Devon, PL21 0JA

WESTCOUNTRY
SCHOOLS TRUST