



3 September 2021

Dear Parent/Guardian

We are very excited to welcome students back into school for the new school year. We particularly welcome our new year 7 students and their families to our school community. We look forward to getting to know you over the next few days and weeks.

I am pleased to report that the staff team have been in school planning, preparing and training so that we are ready to reopen and provide the best possible experience for our students. We look forward, optimistically, to a more “normal” school operation with the removal of many of the Covid restrictions we had to operate under last year. The full details about the changes and arrangements were communicated in a letter from Mrs Foster, School Business Manager [here](#).

The key changes are:

- Students will no longer be in year group bubbles;
- Face coverings will no longer be required to be used in classrooms or corridors. Students and staff can choose to wear them in communal areas;
- The requirement for staff to social distance from students will no longer be in place (with the exception of in the Covid testing centre);
- Responsibility for contact tracing will pass from the school to NHS Test & Trace;
- Close contacts of any positive cases within the school community will no longer be required to isolate. Close contacts will be identified by NHS Test & Trace and will be advised to take a PCR test;
- Staggered starts and ends to the school day will cease.

However, Covid has not “gone away” and we must all continue to be vigilant. So, we have decided to keep in place a number of measures:

- Hand hygiene – regular sanitisation/washing of hands throughout the day;
- Ventilation – keeping windows and doors open where possible, whilst maintaining a comfortable temperature;
- Enhanced cleaning during the school day;
- Cleaning of tables/workspaces at the end of each lesson (to be reviewed at the end of September);
- Twice home weekly testing of staff and students (to be reviewed at the end of September);
- Students/staff displaying symptoms not to come into school until a PCR test is taken and results are known.

As you are aware, we have staggered the start of the term so that we can complete a testing schedule that supports the school opening in a safe way. As a reminder this is the schedule for testing and when students will commence their lessons:

Year Group	Date of first test	Date of return to school	Date of second test
7	02/09 – pm	03/09	07/09
8	06/09 - am	07/09	09/09
9	06/09 – pm	07/09	09/09
10	03/09 – pm	06/09	08/09
11	03/09 - am	06/09	07/09

We will also take some time at the beginning of term to share with our students the changes we have implemented during the school day and to teach about our high expectations of behaviour and attitude to learning. As some of the Covid related restrictions have relaxed, it has given us the opportunity to “reset” our processes and review the way that the school operates. Mr Hood, Assistant Headteacher, wrote to the school community back in July about our expectations and it is worth reviewing what he wrote [here](#).

Upon their return, we will be sharing with our students a summary of our high expectations of behaviour and conduct and the way we expect students to approach their learning. We are calling it the “MER way” and I share it with you for your information and support. It is so important that the school is a calm and positive place for all, and we believe the “MER way” sets out the clear steps that ensures this is our experience.



Summer success

We were delighted for our year 11 students that so many of them achieved a great set of results. The main “headlines” are:

- 75% of students achieved a standard pass in five or more subjects;
- 71% of students achieved a standard pass in English and Maths;
- 57% of students achieved a strong pass (5+) in English and Maths;
- 43% of students attained qualifications across the EBacc suite;
- Average grade across all subjects was 5.4 (a strong pass).

These results are in line with or exceed national figures and although “progress” figures have not been published this year, we know from our own internal estimates that student progress (and therefore a measure of the value that the school has added) is very strong and well above national averages. A link to our press release about the results can be found [here](#).

Students richly deserve these impressive results that were hard earned through a particularly difficult year. It is testament to the resilience and fortitude of our students, and the expertise and dedication of the staff team in the school that these results were achieved. As a result of these qualifications, all students in this year group have the opportunity to move to the next phase of education or training post-16. Well done everybody!

Summer school

We were delighted to be able to run our summer school for a large number of our incoming year 7's. We will let you know more detail about what happened through the next edition of The Pulse (our half-termly newsletter), but suffice to say it provided an extremely positive experience for these students and introduced them to both the school and many members of staff. We think this is going to be invaluable in assisting year 7 students to settle in quickly to life at the school.

Finally, as the school re-opens can I remind parents that access to the school is only via reception and that, unless there is a pre-agreed reason, cars will not be permitted past the barrier at the front of school for the 15 minutes before the start of the school day or for 15 minutes at the end of the day. This is to ensure the safety of students. Crescent Road is a very congested road and we would appeal to parents to consider public transport, walking or cycling as the best options for travelling to school. If a student really must travel to/from school by car, we would ask you to drop and pick up students on the Wokingham Road – a 2-minute walk from the school.

Members of the school leadership team and other staff will be in touch over the next few school days to share with you other important information. Please watch out for these and do remember that school letters can also be found on the school website. As we commence the new year, please do not hesitate to contact the school if you have any questions or concerns. The very best way to do this is to email the school using MERoffice@maidenerleghschool.co.uk and we will get back to you as soon as possible. Our website also contains a wealth of important and useful information <https://www.maidenerleghschoolreading.co.uk>.

All the best as the new year begins!

Yours sincerely



Mr A Johnson
Headteacher