



HEANOR GATE SCIENCE COLLEGE

“Develop all learners to achieve their full potential”
“Create a culture of aspiration”

Principal: **Mr S Huntington**



July 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

Re: September plans for a full re-opening of Heanor Gate Science College

I am writing to you to thank you for your fantastic support throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. This was a situation which none of us could have ever imagined living through, but one where as a school community we united and stayed safe and strong together.

As a school we are immensely proud of the work which has taken place this year: both prior to and during the pandemic. I want to pay a special tribute to our amazing Year 11 and Year 13 cohorts who worked tirelessly for 5 or 7 years whilst at Heanor Gate and were on track to achieve some of the best results the school has ever seen. I know for some the wait for the summer results process to arrive has been an agonising wait but I know as a group of young people they could not have done any more to give themselves the best possible chance of success.

Following the government's announcement on 2 July 2020, advising all schools to take all children back from September, my senior team and I have worked tirelessly to construct a plan which will enable us to fully re-open as safely as possible. Below you will see the details of the plan which essentially isolates year groups as 'bubbles' to ensure that contact with the wider school population is limited where possible whilst also restricting the movement of these bubbles around the school site.

We firmly believe that whilst the core curriculum of English and Maths underpin a child's education, we have a duty to ensure that we provide as wide and diverse a curriculum as possible to all students. For this to happen we need all students and parents/carers to read, understand and follow the guidance and systems meticulously so that we do not have to make any further restrictions to students' educational experience.

We fully appreciate that the information below is lengthy and in some instances complex. Therefore we have recorded a video briefing talking you through the key points:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1-AKVUQZ4pOpNWSR9M4qzpu5RnFEvphd/view?usp=sharing>

1. Bubbles

To comply with government guidelines around 'bubbles' the general plan will involve keeping children within year group bubbles, with the exception of Years 12 and 13 who will form a combined Post 16 bubble. The movement of these bubbles will be restricted where possible to limit the amount of students from different bubbles accessing the same spaces on site.

As such, students will generally be taught in a single block for all of their subjects with staff travelling around the site as opposed to children travelling around the site. Where possible, Post 16 and KS4 classes which require specialised teaching spaces have been allocated these, but this is not always possible.

2. Teaching spaces:

- Year 7 to be based in a hybrid of G/J (G1-6, J10, J11, surplus room J12)
- Year 8 to be taught in E block (E1,2,3, 4, 10, 11, 13, 14, surplus rooms if required: E6, 8 and 9)
- Year 9 to be taught in D block (D5-12). Surplus room if required: E7
- Year 10 to be taught in F block and taught in (F1-9)
- Year 11 to be taught in J block (J1-9)
- Sixth Form to be taught in the following spaces: S1, S2, L1, L3, K1-5, N2/3, N4, N5, H6 & D1-4 (D block entrance is different door from Y9)

Our inclusion and intervention facility (T block) will remain open and accessible to students but year groups will be assigned specific rooms within the facility.

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3. Timing of the school day

To ensure that we follow the guidance on staggering start, break, lunch and finish times we have made some temporary amendments to the school day. Full details can be seen below (under staggered start and finish times) but essentially:

- Wednesday bespoke timings will be temporarily halted and all days will follow the same timings.
- The school day will be extended/shortened for some year groups by 10 minutes at the start and/or end of the day.
- Period 1 will begin at 9.10am for all students.
- Period 2 to run for 1 hour 15 with an allocated 15 minute break within that time slot.

Staggered start and finish times

Staggering the start and finish times will reduce the risk of 'bubbles' coming into contact with each other on the school site at any one time.

Students who arrive late will not be permitted to enter the school site with other year groups. They will need to see SLT staff on duty who will sanction/send them to the canopy to await collection by their Achievement Leader/Assistant Achievement Leader. **Arriving on time and at the correct time will be critical.**

Students who are late for an authorised reason will sign in with reception staff and then make their way to their designated teaching space, (where possible they will be escorted) as directed by reception staff.

Bubble	Start time	Entrance	Exit time	Exit
7	8.40am	Main double gate (hall entrance)	2.45pm	Sixth form gates
8	8.50am	Main double gate (hall entrance)	2.55pm	Sixth form gates
9	8.50am	Main gate (ramp)	2.45pm	Main gate (ramp)
10	8.40am	Main gate (ramp)	2.55pm	Main gate (ramp)
11	8.40am	Sixth form gates	3.05pm	Main gate (ramp)
Sixth Form	9.05am	Sixth Form gates	3.15pm	Sixth form gates

Staggered break/lunch times

<i>Year group</i>	<i>Break TIME</i>	<i>Lunch TIME</i>	<i>Break / lunch VENUE</i>
7	10.40am-10.55am	12.55pm-13.25pm	Hall
8	10.10am-10.25am	12.25pm-12.55pm	New gym
9	11.10am-11.25am	13.25pm-13.55pm	New gym
10	10.10am-10.25am	12.25pm-12.55pm	Hall
11	11.10am-11.25am	13.25pm-13.55pm	Hall
12	10.10am-10.25am	12.25pm-12.55pm	Sixth form common room
13	11.10am-11.25am	13.25pm-13.55pm	Sixth form common room

Please note the menu will be vastly reduced in terms of options - menu will be sent out via AL communication

4. General movement around site

- Students movement around the site should be limited.
- The whole scale one way system (in place during phased re-opening) will no longer exist but general principles around one way entry and exit from break will be briefed to students on their first day and be clearly signposted.

- Students should continue to use the toilets during lesson time only. Each year group will have dedicated toilets. This will restrict ad-hoc movement around site and prevent any unforeseen 'pressure point' with large groups of students.
 - Y7 G block
 - Y8 E block
 - Y9 D block
 - Y10 F block
 - Y11 K block - a physical barrier will be placed between toilet entry door and classrooms preventing cross year group interaction
 - Post 16 S block
- The courts and other social spaces (other than canopy areas above) will be out of bounds.

5. Attendance

School attendance has been proven to have a huge impact on achieving good grades. During the period of phased reopening the school has supported families in personal decisions not to send their children back, this cannot continue in September. The government has made it clear that all children should return to school unless:

1. They test positive for and are self-isolating for Covid 19.
2. They are ill for other reasons.

Every student at this school is expected to maintain an attendance level of at least 97%, in line with the government's expectations. Whilst it is appreciated that children are unwell from time to time, and there may be exceptional circumstances for absences, please think carefully about taking your child out of school as persistent absence is proven to have a significant impact upon a child's educational attainment. We will continue to work with the local authority in terms of tackling persistent absence and issue fixed penalty notices where appropriate.

TERM TIME HOLIDAYS

Since September 2013, holidays in term time are no longer authorised unless they are for exceptional circumstances. This is Government law in partnership with the Department for Education. We take any incidents of unauthorised holiday very seriously.

6. Punctuality

Being on time is not only an essential life skill, but also something which has a huge impact on learning. Being on time to school provides a positive routine which sets students up for the day ahead and being on time for lessons allows teachers to maximise time available to help students learn.

Given the nature of staggered starts punctuality will prove more crucial than ever. Students should be through the main gates no earlier than 5 minutes prior to their start time and line up in their year group designated area. Any student who arrives after the start time for their bubble must report directly to staff at the school gate, will be registered as late and be escorted up to their year group area at a suitable time. Students who are late will be sanctioned as per the schools late policy.

7. Behaviour Systems and Covid Safe Behaviour

Strong discipline has always been a key driver for the success of our school and students on the whole behave really well. The school has an achievement and behaviour monitoring system to enable us to reward students' success and monitor incidents of poor behaviour across the school. The achievement points are distributed by all staff in recognition of students' progress across a range of key 'Behaviour for Learning' attributes. Behaviour points are similarly distributed by staff when behaviour falls short of basic expectations. On these occasions, students will also receive a sanction which is consistent with the behaviour issue in question and this will be communicated by the Teacher and/or Achievement Leader.

In September we will continue to reward those who follow school rules and act with courtesy and equally we will continue to sanction poor behaviour. It is, however, really important to draw your attention to the 'new environment' that we will be faced with.

Due to our need to keep students in bubbles, there will be a number of key things students and parents must be aware of:

1. Covid manners must be followed; students need to ensure they follow one way systems, respect the need to socially distance from staff and other year bubbles, minimise physical contact with other students within their bubble etc.
2. A number of our internal behaviour support systems (the achievement centre, faculty withdrawal rooms, our internal exclusion unit) which have historically reduced our need to exclude students from school will not be available. As such any students who fail to follow protocols will risk being sent home and excluded. Whilst we still want to avoid excluding students where possible we cannot have individuals ignoring guidance and putting students and staff at risk.

8. Uniform

At Heanor Gate we pride ourselves on being prepared for school and looking extremely smart and ready to learn. It is paramount that your son/daughter comes to school in the correct uniform. The uniform policy states that the following uniform must be worn:

- Black blazer with school badge
- Plain white shirt tucked in at the waist and buttoned at the top
- Plain black tailored trousers or tailored knee length skirt (skirts made out of stretchy t shirt style material are not acceptable)
- Clip-on school tie - house colours
- Boys: black socks
- Girls: black or white socks/black or flesh coloured tights
- Plain black shoes (no boots, open toes shoes, pumps or trainers)

From 2019 all Spencer Academy Trust schools introduced some entry level standards that are consistent across all of the schools, these will remain in place. They include:

1. No jewellery is to be worn, with the exception of one stud in each earlobe. No visible necklaces, bracelets, rings or other piercings (including tongue piercings or those in the Helix or Tragus) will be allowed.
2. Students will only be permitted to wear 'subtle makeup' but will not be permitted to wear nail varnish or polish. In addition, no extreme or unnatural hair colouring will be permitted.

These Spencer Academy Trust standards are non-negotiable so please ensure you do not send your child to school with any prohibited items of jewellery or make up. Failure to meet the correct uniform standards will result in your child needing to be collected from school to rectify any issues.

A full list of items can be found in the Uniform Policy on our website.

9. Equipment

It is essential that all students have the correct equipment so they are 'ready to learn.' Our minimum expectation is that all students will always have a pen, pencil, ruler, a maths set and calculator. Equally we expect this equipment to be carried in an appropriate school bag. This is even more important given the Covid-19 situation as the sharing of resources increases the risk of infection. Staff have been advised that they are not to 'lend' equipment to students.

Students will be responsible for their school books and will need to bring the correct set of books to and from school on a daily basis. Not only will this allow students to share their great work with parents and carers at home but it is also vital as teachers are no longer teaching in their 'usual' classrooms and cannot be expected to be carrying multiple sets of books around the site. Students who forget their books will be expected to copy up any work done on paper at home.

Having the correct equipment is a compulsory requirement of attending Heanor Gate.

10. Use of Mobile Phones

As of 1 September 2019 the Spencer Academies Trust will be enforcing a zero tolerance on students' use of mobile phones on the school site at any point during the school day. I fully understand the need for students to carry phones for their safety when travelling to and from school, however, it is not necessary for mobile phones to be switched on during the school day. The school will hold a firm stance on this and will confiscate any phones which are visible. The advice for any student bringing a mobile phone on to the school site is to ensure it is switched off and stored in their school bag. Repeat offences will be taken very seriously.

For more information on the recent research carried out by Onward into the impact of mobile phone usage in schools please follow this link: <https://parentsandteachers.org.uk/the-pte-phone-free-school-campaign/>

11. 'Cashless' and 'Paperless' School

The school successfully became a cashless school from September 2017 and since then all transactions (school meals, trips etc.) have been paid for via ParentPay. The fingerprint system will be fully sanitised in between services so that there is no risk of cross contamination between bubbles. If you need any further information on this please contact the school.

We have come a long way in our aim to become a more eco-efficient school, and as such, we are now using email as our method of communication to home. For those of you who use Twitter, please follow us @HeanorGateSC for updates on school's key events and notices.

Given the current uncertainty around group gatherings, plans for parent/evening activities are currently on hold. Once guidance becomes clearer we will make appropriate arrangements to release dates for these as soon as possible. For now, please note the start dates and times for individual year groups:

Wednesday 2 September 2020

- Year 7 on site, 8.40am arrival, 2.45pm finish
- Year 12 on site, 9.05am arrival, 11.20am finish

Thursday 3 September 2020

- Years 7-13 on site, staggered arrival times as detailed earlier.

I wish you a pleasant summer break and look forward to returning in the new academic year.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Huntington', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mr S Huntington
Executive Principal