



# Sir Joseph Williamson's Mathematical School

Principal: Mr E Hodges



15<sup>th</sup> July 2020

Dear Parent / Guardian

I am writing to you in order to outline some of our initial planning for September 2020. Whilst we anticipate further guidance in mid-August, and therefore will write to you once we have received that information with a final set of arrangements, we felt that both parents and pupils would appreciate an indication of our planning to date.

In simple terms, we are going to follow the government's published guidance for secondary schools. The biggest impact of this is that pupils will be placed in year group bubbles. They will be taught as normal, in these groups, but will also have social time, lunch time and assembly time only in these groups. In order to facilitate this, each year group bubble will be given a designated set of rooms in the same area of the school. For example, Year 13 will use the new Maths block, Year 11 the English area and so on. Pupils will have all their lessons in these rooms, with KS3 classes being in the same room and KS4 and KS5 having some movement only within this suite of rooms. The only exception to this will be practical lessons which require specialist equipment such as DT, Art, Music, Computing and some Science lessons. For these lessons pupils will be collected and taken to the specialist room. Additional risk assessments will be put in place to cover the cleaning of these rooms and the cleaning of equipment to ensure the safety of this. This enables us to continue to deliver the full curriculum in the most engaging way.

Beyond teaching there are a range of other measures that we will be putting in place. One of the most challenging for all secondary schools is arrival and departure. The government guidance requires us to encourage parents and pupils not to use public transport where possible. We understand completely that this will be difficult for many. We would ask that those who do not use school buses try to arrive by 8.10am at the latest. This will spread both traffic and pupil arrival to make it less crowded. Pupils will be given different entry gates as far as is possible and then will go directly to their suite of rooms. At the end of the day pupils will be released between 3.00pm and 3.15pm dependent on their year group in order to spread departure.

Break and lunchtime will also be split with Years 7, 8 and 9 having break and lunch at a different time to Years 10, 11, 12 and 13. Even within these splits, each year group will have its own serving area for food so they will form separate queues, and they will have their own social space both inside and outside. Whilst there might be some brief transitory contact with other year groups on the way to these areas, this contact will be minimal and therefore, according to the government guidelines, very low risk.

There are a number of other aspects of school time which will be affected. Pupils will continue to study both Games and PE. In order to minimise use of changing rooms which are viewed as a higher risk area by the government, pupils in Years 7-11 will be asked to attend school in their Games kit on the day of their Games afternoon. On the days they have PE they should attend in normal uniform, but we will be undertaking PE options which don't require full changing, just a change of footwear.

**Sir Joseph Williamson's Mathematical School**

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In line with government guidelines we will be encouraging additional hand washing and providing hand sanitiser, for example in food queues or prior to practical lessons. However, given the number of pupils and the nature of the school site, requiring 1400 students to wash their hands on arrival at school is as likely to create a risk by causing pupils to group together as it is to mitigate risk. Therefore, students should attend school with their own small bottle of hand sanitizer, which will from September become a part of their daily equipment in the same way a calculator is now. This should be used appropriately by the child and when directed by staff. In terms of other equipment, the use of masks is explicitly referenced by the government as being unnecessary and an impediment to teaching and learning. Therefore, these will not be worn in classrooms. However, if it makes students more comfortable as they move round the site or in their year group lunch queues, we will have no objection to them. If students are using public transport, then face masks are mandatory.

I hope this goes some way to alleviating concerns that either pupils or parents have. We are confident that we are able to put in place all of the government's recommendations for September, and therefore look forward to welcoming all pupils back to school. We will be in regular contact in the latter half of the summer holidays with further updates and specific rooming arrangements. We will also advise of any further information that pupils or parents need to know. In the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact the school if you have any questions or need any assistance.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "E. Hodges". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Mr E Hodges  
Headteacher