



# SIR THOMAS FREMANTLE SCHOOL

A CO-EDUCATIONAL SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS AGED 11-19

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10<sup>th</sup> July 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

## Re: Procedures for September

What a year! This has been the strangest and most challenging year we have faced in teaching for a long time (or ever?). We have all missed our students and the energy they bring to the school; they are the heartbeat of STFS. I know after speaking with a number of parents and carers, that the students have missed being in school too. The staff cannot wait to welcome them back and begin the process of reacclimatising your children back in to school and their education. I wanted to thank the students and staff for their outstanding hard work over this period. You have done yourselves proud and we are lucky to have you. I also want to extend my thanks to parents and carers; these last few months have not been easy, and your support has been exceptional.

Regarding our new Year 7s, I am sure you all remember the feeling of anxiously waiting to start secondary school. This feeling is often reduced when the Year 6s have attended our transition days, helping them get ready for the new year ahead. However, with us being unable to have the traditional transition days in July, we have slightly modified the start of the academic year in September. For those joining us in Year 7, we will provide some time in the school without other year groups, so they can settle and find their way around in a relatively empty building. We feel this will really help those in Year 7 to adjust to moving to secondary school and allow them to build some confidence before the masses return. The key dates for September therefore are as follows:

Monday 31<sup>st</sup> August – Bank Holiday

Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> September – Staff INSET Day- No Students

Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September – New Year 7 only

Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> September – New Year 7 only

Friday 4<sup>th</sup> September – New Year 7 and New Year 12 Students.

Monday 7<sup>th</sup> September – All remaining students to return.

Ordinarily all students would have returned on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup>, but we feel this time will be so important for our youngest and newest members of the school community to adjust to life at STFS.



I am delighted with the Government's announcement last week that all children will return to school in September, although it is important to point out that there will be some modifications and changes to how school will run. Our relatively small size does have a number of benefits; currently and most notably it does mean we can manage their return more easily than larger schools, as long as everyone follows our expectations. The guidance states that schools should not make any changes that will stop all students returning in September. With this in mind, we have implemented a number of measures that we feel will protect all members of the school community and allow students to return in full. Some of the changes include:

- a one way system
- hand basins installed at the front of the school where hand washing will be completed before entering the building
- we will not be offering hot food at break or lunch for students unless they are entitled to free school meals, so most students will need to bring a packed lunch and snacks
- each year group will have designated areas at break and lunchtime
- we have also taken the decision to take student temperatures on entry to the building each morning.

I have created a separate document included with this email explaining the one way system and some of the other modifications we have made. Please spend some time with your child going through this document over the Summer. We will share this with all students in September, but if they have an understanding beforehand it will be helpful for all.

With reference to temperature readings, the Government have advised schools against this as it is not a reliable indication of COVID-19. However, a student with a high temperature clearly indicates that they are unwell in some way, and we want to avoid any illness developing on site. The data gathered from the temperature readings will not be stored by the school at all.

Furthermore, there are some changes to how lessons will be delivered. For example, students will not be using any wind instruments in music, or sharing equipment in their science lessons. We will also be reducing the number of visitors to the school site during the day and after school. This will mean that parents and carers arriving at reception without a prior agreement will not be able to see staff. We would hope that most communication can take place via the telephone in the first instance. If a meeting is necessary, it is likely to take place via a video meeting platform. This will help us manage all visitors to the school site.

In our efforts to help protect all members of the school community, we would urge all students to bring hand sanitiser and tissues to school. We will have supplies of these, but it is less of a risk if students are using their own supplies. Students will be reminded and encouraged regularly to wash their hands and ensure they maintain high levels of hygiene throughout the day. Again, the Government have said that face coverings are not needed in school. However, I feel that this is your decision as parents and carers to make. If students wish to wear a sensible face covering, they will be allowed to do so. Schools have also been directed to amend their Behaviour Policy to include behaviours that are relevant to COVID-19. For example, our amendment reflects our one way system and students supporting the safe movement around school. If any student deliberately breaks any of the modified rules that are in place to protect all, they will face serious sanctions. Again, I have included this amendment in this communication. We will share this with all students on their return, but we need to be clear that we will have a zero tolerance approach to this. This is in everyone's interests and safety. To reassure all parents and carers, the Department for Education state that:



*The risk to children themselves of becoming severely ill from coronavirus (COVID-19) is very low and there are negative health impacts of being out of school. We know that school is a vital point of contact for public health and safeguarding services that are critical to the wellbeing of children and families.*

Despite this reassurance, it is still important that all members of the school community follow the amendments to the Climate for Learning Policy. Clearly all of these measures are subject to change at short notice. This will very much depend on how the guidance develops or the local situation changes. I will, of course, keep you updated with any significant changes. I would like to thank you in advance for your support in this matter.

Looking forward to schooling starting again, the Summer break is a good opportunity to restock those pencil cases. Again, in order to reduce transmission risks, school or students not be able to loan pens or pencils to their peers. Therefore, it is an absolute must that all students have sufficient reserves of pens should theirs run out of ink. In addition to the typical items on the equipment list, we are also recommending that students add items such as a hand sanitiser, tissues, a small stapler, a small pair of scissors, small dictionary for English and MFL lessons, and a glue stick. These are all items that traditionally get passed around by teachers and students. A key measure in trying to protect everyone, is ensuring that all students are properly equipped to reduce contact between them. I appreciate that this can be quite an expensive time, but pound Shops or supermarkets are often the cheapest places to purchase these items. A complete list of equipment can be seen below.

## Equipment

- Pencil Case
- Pens (x 2 minimum)
- Pencils (x 2 minimum)
- Ruler
- Rubber
- Pencil Sharpener
- Highlighters
- Calculator- Speak with your Maths teacher about which one
- Reading Book
- HW Planner
- English Dictionary
- MFL Language Dictionary-
- Scissors
- Glue Stick
- Small Stapler
- Colouring Pencils/Pens
- Protractor
- Compass
- Hand Sanitiser
- Tissues
- PE Kit- including appropriate footwear.



**HAVE PRIDE IN YOUR LEARNING**



In addition to this, students will need to leave all exercise books in school and any homework will be set and completed via Microsoft Teams. This reduces the transfer of books and paper between students and teachers. As I said previously, how school will look in September will take some time to adjust to. Every member of the school community has a responsibility in ensuring the school is as safe as it possibly can be. Everyone must play their role.

Students will need to return to school in full school uniform. The only exceptions will be the Year 7s who may have encountered delays in blazers arriving. Our students have always looked incredibly smart inside and outside of school and this is something that will continue.

There has been an extraordinary amount written about missed education during lockdown. An interesting perspective that may help to give parents, carers and students some reassurance is that students haven't missed education altogether. They have missed a period of *schooling*, and we are just a part of their education. Children are typically at school for 2730 days, from Reception to Year 13. From the beginning of the lockdown period to the end of this current academic year, students have been away from school for around 70 days – this is around 2.5% of their overall schooling, but not 2.5% of their education. Whilst their provision of education has changed, their education has not stopped. When students return in September, one of our jobs will of course be in helping them to readjust to school and in supporting their mental health as well as their educational needs. I think that some parents have done themselves a disservice in thinking that their child can only learn when they are at school. We all know that there is so much more to learning than this, and you have played a vital role in maintaining and developing your child's learning and resilience during this time. I have complete confidence in the teachers, students and parents that any gaps will be reduced and that all students will be prepared for the next phase of their development.

The Secretary of State for Education has confirmed that they are not asking schools to open over the summer holidays, and there is no expectation that schools should open for vulnerable children and children of critical workers over this period. Teachers, support staff and school leaders deserve a break, to recharge and rest. However, if you are keen for your child to continue working, you can follow this link to a full quota of online lessons and learning. These lessons have been shared by The Greenshaw Academy Trust in London.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCfrjZrO08ud5b7p4Nf17pQ/playlists>

Finally, I just wanted to wish you all a restful Summer, and we can all look forward to a full and thriving school once again in September. Your support and kindness have been humbling and make me proud to be part of STFS.

Yours faithfully,

Neale Pledger  
Headteacher

