

Parent and Carers Guide to September School Opening at Upton Court Grammar School

1st September 2020

The principles of school opening

All of our planning adheres to the government guidance for secondary schools. The government guidance provides for the opening of schools to all pupils with a clear 'system of controls' in place to continue to prevent the spread of COVID-19. The guidance makes very clear that the crisis is not yet over and schools should take action to reduce the risk of transmission.

The guidance recognises the need to minimise the number of pupils and staff in contact with each other, but equally stresses the need for pupils to experience a full broad and balanced curriculum with specialist teaching wherever possible. In order to achieve this, the recommendation we have adopted is for year group sized bubbles as well as changes to the school day. This sits alongside a wider set of mitigating measures we are taking covering the usage of equipment, pupil behaviour and how staff will undertake their roles.

The government guidance emphasises that the measures schools put in place are not 'all-or-nothing' - even where measures are implemented in a partial form due to the realities of a particular setting, these will still bring positive benefits from a public health point of view.

The parent guide has been amended to reflect the updated DfE guidance on 28th August 2020 which includes the wearing of face coverings in school.

Our zoning approach

We are dividing our school into zoned areas, each containing a separate year group. Each of these zones have been carefully designed to be conducive to our curriculum, as well as providing a specific entrance and exit and access to outdoor space for breaks and a dedicated set of student toilets.

The zones for the different year groups are as follows:

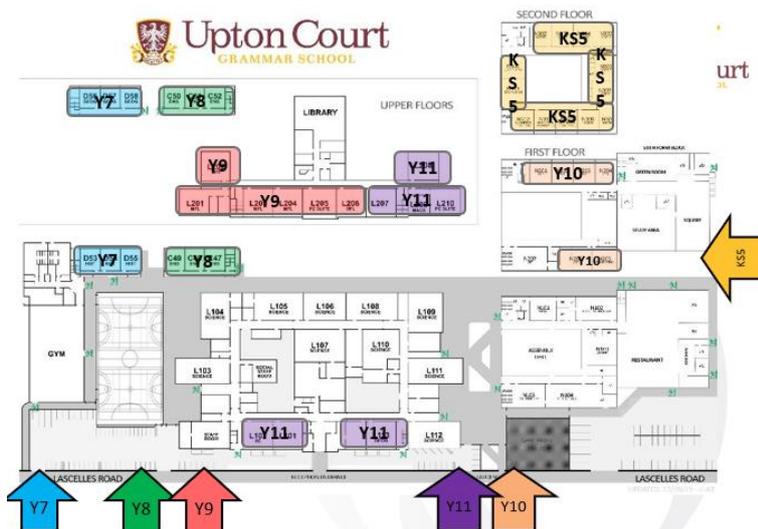
Year Group	Entrance / Exit Gates	Allocated Classrooms	Allocated Toilets
Year 7	Sports Hall Gate	D Block	Sports Centre Student Toilets
Year 8	MUGA Gate	English block	New Block Level 1 Student Toilets (ground floor)

Year Group	Entrance / Exit Gates	Allocated Classrooms	Allocated Toilets
Year 9	MUGA Gate	L200s	Legacy Block Student Toilets
Year 10	Lascelles Road - Car Park Gate	N200s New Block level 2	New Block Level 2 Student Toilets
Year 11	Lascelles Road Student Entrance Gate	L100s / L200s	Restaurant Student Toilets
Year 12	A4 (Bus Stop) Gate	Lessons: N300s New Block level 3 Private Study: KS5 Study Room	New Block Level 3 Student Toilets
Year 13	A4 (Bus Stop) Gate	Lessons: N300s New Block level 3 Private Study: The Square	KS5 Square Toilets

All areas will be labelled with clear signage and pupils will receive explanations to ensure they are familiar with the features of their zone and expectations about moving around school.

Pupil arrival and departure

Pupils in Year 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 will be required to arrive to school by 8:30am. They should only enter through their allocated entrance as shown below:



We are strongly urging parents to arrange for students to travel to school on foot or by bicycle. Where this is not possible, we would like to ask parents to arrange drop-off by car to avoid the use of public transport.

Sixth Form start times:

- Year 13 will have one tutor time a week, agreed with their tutor, in order to provide pastoral support and prepare for UCAS/post-18 pathways. This will begin at 8:30am
- Y13 will arrive on all other days at 8:55am if they have a lesson period 1
- If Y13 do not have a period 1 lesson, students should arrive in time for first timetabled lesson and sign in at reception.
- Y12 and Y13 have permission to leave when they have finished lessons for the day
- All students must sign in and out at reception

Implementing these staggered start times will be of benefit of all and are a privilege to our eldest students. These arrangements are subject to change if they are not followed correctly or are misused.

The school day will finish at a later time than usual: at 3:25pm. This is to accommodate the staggered lunch break. Some Sixth Form lessons will continue to be timetabled in period 6, which will run from 3:25pm to 4:25pm.

It is vital for public safety that we are minimising the number of adults congregating at school. In addition, our staggered entrance arrangements, we would like to encourage all parents to play their role in ensuring the health and wellbeing of our community by not congregating at school and by enabling your child to walk or cycle to school unaccompanied, wherever possible.

Teaching arrangements

In line with government guidance, while pupils will remain within their zones in most cases, they will still receive subject specialist teaching from all subjects. This will take the form of teachers coming to their class within their zone (the opposite of the common practice where pupils would go to the teacher).

As pupils are in a year group sized bubble, as recommended by government guidance, it is acceptable for pupils to be organised into different formations (eg. tutor groups, teaching groups and sets) across the school day. These will take place following our usual timetable and bubbles will be kept separate. This will minimise the amount of movement by students around school during the day.

There will occasions when students will need to move outside of their zone area for specialist teaching, for example, this will be the case for outdoor PE, computing and some science lessons that are practically based. Students will be asked to always walk on the left, to follow the clear signage and explanations regarding one-way systems and entry and exit and to only use their bubble's allocated toilets.

Routines

There are a number of additional routines in place to keep all members of our school community safe and these will be explained to pupils. These are all in line with the government guidance:

- Pupils will go straight to their tutor room upon arriving at school (with the exception of Y13)
- Pupils will have a seating plan for all their classes.
- Pupils must keep a distance from others and at least 2 metres distance from adults.
- Classrooms will be arranged with desks facing towards the front and pupils sitting side by side wherever this is possible.
- We will continually be promoting best practice in terms of hygiene and public health:
 - Pupils discouraged from touching mouth, eyes and nose.
 - Pupils encouraged to "catch it, kill it, bin it".
 - Pupils instructed to wash hands for twenty seconds when using the toilet facilities.
 - Pupils will be reminded of COVID-19 symptoms and what to do should they develop them.
- Pupils will line up in their outdoor areas at the end of morning and lunch break ready for their next lessons; this will allow a staggered entrance to the school building.
- Pupils will use hand sanitiser upon entry and exit to all classrooms.
- Pupils will keep their belongings beneath or on their desk during lessons.
- Pupils will leave school via their designated exit at the end of the school day and not congregate outside of school.

Equipment

Pupils will not be able to use lockers. Instead, all of their equipment must be contained within a rucksack bag/backpack, which pupils must wear using both straps across their shoulders. This is to ensure safety within the corridors.

Pupils should bring

- As much of their own stationery as they can, including the following:
 - Pens (including spares)
 - Pencils, rubbers and sharpeners
 - A ruler
 - Protractor
 - Colouring pencils and/or felt tip pens
 - A scientific calculator
 - A glue stick
- A packed lunch (if they are not having meals in the school restaurant) and a snack (there will be no snacks available from the restaurant at break except for Y13).
- Their PE kit, which they should wear in place of uniform on timetabled PE days.

- Their planner.

Pupils should not bring in any additional equipment that they do not require for their school day. They must not bring in equipment designed for sharing, such as games, cards or sporting equipment (e.g. a football).

In line with [DfE guidance](#), students in Key Stage 3, Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 can wear a face covering when moving around the school and in communal areas (e.g. Study Centre).

- When in a classroom (during a lesson or lesson changeover) and any dining areas, face coverings are to be removed.
- When collecting lunch and moving to a table, a face covering can be worn.
- Where a student has a medical condition that may require additional PPE to be worn, they will be asked to provide a letter from their medical professional to detail what is required. Where this is the case, that information will be provided to the staff who work with that individual.

For a face covering to be effective students should ensure the following:

- The face covering should cover your nose and mouth while allowing you to breath comfortably.
- You should wash your hands or use hand sanitiser before putting it on and taking it off.
- When wearing the face covering, you should avoid touching your face at all times.
- Temporary face coverings must be disposed of in a 'black bag' waste bin (not recycling bin) or placed in a plastic bag that can be taken home.
- You should also follow other safety measures, including social distancing and regular hand washing.

All face coverings worn in school should be plain, or have a simple pattern, and they should not include text, logos, images or deemed to be offensive.

Members of staff can choose to wear a face covering when in school. This will take the form of a visor when staff are undertaking student-facing work and a face covering at other times.

Pupils can bring a mobile 'phone, but this (along with any other electronic device) must be switched off and kept within their backpack, unless under the supervision of a member of staff. Staff will continue to confiscate electronic devices that are seen out or otherwise interrupt learning in line with current practice.

Break, lunch and extra-curricular

We recognise that break times are especially important upon our return as pupils will have missed out enormously on the chance to socialise. While play involving shared equipment cannot be allowed, we have worked to ensure all zones have an appropriate social area.

In September, our morning break will be at the same time as usual.

Lunch time will then take place in a staggered manner:

- Years 7, 9 and 11 will have their lunch break at 12.25pm until 13.25pm.
- Years 8, 10, 12 and 13 will have their lunch break at 13:25pm till 14:55pm.

Pupils having packed lunches will have the chance to eat these in a separate space (e.g. the hall), where possible.

Pupils having lunch from the restaurant will need to arrive at their allocated times, which will be shared with them during student induction.

We know the importance of extra-curricular activities and are working to best provide for these while ensuring we are keeping within the government guidance and the principles of our own planning. We will provide an extra-curricular club on Wednesday afternoons only in the first instance. We will keep this under review and will aim to introduce further activities in due course. We will continue to update you on this over the autumn term. Parents/carers will be contacted in September to indicate if they wish their child to stay on site on a Wednesday afternoon until 3:05pm.

Pupil Culture and Conduct

We will continue to operate using our culture policy, which is based on our core values and the principles of three rules: Aim High; Be Kind; Be Proud. However, there are some specific provisions we need to make to keep all of our school community safe and happy while we are operating under the government guidance of a 'system of controls'. To achieve this, we have developed a culture policy addendum. This goes beyond the scope of a regular culture/behaviour policy to include the behaviours we ask for from pupils, but also parents and staff as well. **We ask all parents to read the policy and share the relevant details with their child prior to their return in September.**

Wider School life

While the 'system of controls' does present some restrictions, we are using the innovative spirit that recent months have demanded in order to find new ways for certain activities to take place. Here are just some examples:

- Assemblies will take place via video conferencing software, enabling interactions with an entire year group, house, key stage or the whole school.
- Our house system will still bring together a sense of community across year groups
- Our student leadership teams will also be challenged to innovate, finding ways they can lead their areas of responsibility.
- Our school library will adapt in line with what public libraries are trialling (for example a "click and collect" model will be explored)
- Rewards and recognition for students will continue as before.

Unfortunately, trips, visits and guest speakers will not be planned initially for the autumn term and this will be kept under review.

Preparing your child for school

We hope this guide has been helpful in allowing your child to feel more prepared for school. However, we know your child will doubtless have questions - and perhaps some worries too. This is natural in what has been such a time of enormous upheaval for all. Therefore, our students have filmed a video, outlining some of the changes to school on our return that your child can watch. This video, along with this guide, is available on the school website here: <http://www.uptoncourtgrammar.org.uk/SOS20>

In addition, upon their first day back, your child's form tutor will be providing them with a comprehensive induction, going through all the details of changes to our routines.

As has previously been communicated, we know that - alongside all of the practicalities to ensure physical safety and public health - you are going to be rightly very mindful of your child's wellbeing at this time of transition. As a school, we are going to be placing a focus on social and emotional learning when they return to this. This will be coordinated between form tutors, PSHE lessons, our specialist members of staff (such as our SENCo and pastoral team). This work is based around the principles developed by Dr Marc Brackett in his book, [Permission to Feel](#), which you may like to read.

We know that all pupils will require some social and emotional support, but some will require much more than others. Where there are particular higher levels of need, we are working to ensure bespoke provisions are in place. This will be an ongoing process, but -as ever- will be done in partnership with parents or carers.

Uniform

As per the student culture policy COVID-19 addendum students will be expected to wear full school uniform when they return to school in September. On days when students have PE they are to attend school in their PE kit. Parents are encouraged to wash their child's clothes after a day at school.

Parents must inform their child's form tutor if there is any reason affecting the wearing of correct school uniform. You can do this by emailing the office or by writing a note in your child's planner.

Failure to comply with the school uniform policy may result in one or more of the following actions:

- Step 2 issued
- Parents contacted

Please refer to the specific uniform guidance including appendices at the end of this correspondence.

Next steps

Please can we ask for you to spend the coming days going through this information and the accompanying culture policy addendum with your child?

September return

Please find details of the dates and times that each year group will be expected to return to school in September below. All Year 7 students will be expected to bring a packed lunch on Thursday 3rd and Friday 4th September.

Thursday 3rd September

Year 7 – to arrive at 8.30am

Year 9 – to arrive at 9.00am

Year 12 – to arrive at 9.30am

Friday 4th September

All year groups – to arrive at 8.30am

When arriving at school students will be expected to enter the school via their designated gate.

Thank you very much for your ongoing support,

The Senior Leadership Team