

# Westlands School

Expect More

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CHH/ELA/Plans for September

27 August 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

I hope that you and your family have had a relaxing and healthy summer holiday. I am writing to you today to confirm the back to school plans for September.

## Testing Arrangements

As I am sure you have seen in the media, the government have asked all students in England to take two lateral flow tests in the week they return to school. These tests need to be taken 3 to 5 days apart. Students and their families have a choice regarding how they take these tests: they can either be done at home using a home testing kit or, if you prefer, your child can conduct their tests on the school site.

I know that many of our students will feel more comfortable completing their tests at home, so I wanted to remind you that you can collect tests from your local pharmacy or one of the collection points around the local area. Further guidance can be found using this link:

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/health/protect-kent-and-medway/test-and-trace/how-to-get-tested/symptom-free-testing>

We will be opening the school site on the following days for those families who wish their child to take their tests on site at Westlands:

Date of Test	Year Group	Test Number
Tuesday 31 August – 9.00am – 3.00pm	7 & 8	1
Wednesday 1 September – 9.00am – 3.00pm	All other year groups	1
Friday 3 September- during the school day	7 & 8	2
Monday 6 September – 3.00pm – 6.00pm	All other year groups	2

Home-test kits are also available through the school. Any parent who would like to collect a kit for their child can do so on Tuesday 31 August between 9.00am - 2.30pm from Cryalls Gate.



My colleague, Mr Hallam, will be writing to all families later today giving you more details about the testing arrangements and the necessary request forms. However, I would like to take this opportunity to make it clear that no child in Year 7 and 8 will be given a test during the school day on Friday 3 September without full written consent from their parent. More details regarding this can be found in Mr Hallam's letter.

### **Return to School Dates**

At Westlands, we believe it is important for our new Year 7 to attend school a day before the other year groups. This allows our new students to have the time and space they need to find their way around our school site and ask any questions they may have, before they are joined, a day later, by the other year groups.

Our new Year 8 students were unable to have this experience when they joined us last year, as they were kept in 'bubbles'. These 'bubbles' stayed mainly in one classroom and even though these students have been with us for 12 months, there are still many parts of the school that they have never visited.

**So, this year, we are asking our new Year 8 students to join our new Year 7 students and return to school on Friday 3 September.**

This will give both year groups the chance to make sure they feel comfortable following their timetable and ensure they can move around the school site confidently before we ask our older students to return.

The return dates for all year groups are summarised below:

Years 7 and 8	Friday 3 September, 8.30am – 3.00pm
Year 12 Enrolment	Friday 3 September, 10.00am – 1.00pm
Years 9, 10, 11 and 13	Monday 6 September, 8.30am – 3.00pm

### **School Timetables**

When students in Years 8-11 arrive to school on their allotted return day, they should make their way to their timetabled period 1 lesson. Students in Years 8-11 have already been sent a paper copy of their new timetable to their home address and they should also be able to access their timetable electronically on their Student Portal along with your access via MCAS. However, we will also have members of staff from each year group on their allocated gate who will be able to direct any student who is unsure where to go and provide them with a new copy of their timetable, should this be required.

Year 7 students should enter the school site through the main gate on Westlands Avenue. A team of staff will be waiting for them and will escort them to their playground. They will then be collected by their period 1 teacher from the playground and be escorted to their lesson.

## COVID-19 Measures

I have attached an information sheet which gives you more guidance on the government's new regulations for schools in England and hopefully it will answer any of the questions you may have.

The government has asked each school to prepare an outbreak management plan that would be introduced if Public Health England felt there was a localised outbreak of COVID-19, or if the number of COVID-19 cases in the local area causes concern. To help us smoothly introduce these plans, we have decided to continue asking each year group to spend unstructured time (before school, break and lunch) in separate year group areas, to use separate toilets, canteen facilities and entrance and exit gates. There are also many other health and safety benefits from keeping these measures in place and it allows our year group teams to offer focused support.

## Entrance and Exit Gates

There have been some small changes to the gates that students should use to enter and exit the school site this year. To avoid any confusion, I have listed the gates that each year group should use below.

Year 7	Main gate on Westlands Avenue (right hand side)
Year 8	Newlands gate on Newlands Avenue
Year 9	Main gate on Westlands Avenue (left hand side)
Year 10, 11, 12 and 13	Cryalls Gate

## Collecting / Dropping off Your Child

Please do not attempt to drive your car up Westlands Avenue or Newlands Avenue when dropping off or collecting your child. Both these roads are simply too narrow, with too many children using them to be considered a safe drop off or pick up point. Instead, we would strongly encourage parents to use a different/safer location further along the A2.

The school gates are locked before 8.30am and 2.50pm to ensure parents do not attempt to drive onto the school site during the start and end of the school day. Only our pedestrian entrances will be open at these times. Once again, this is to ensure the safety of our students.

New Year 7 parents should not attempt to enter the school site to collect their child. Instead, we would encourage parents to meet their child away from the school gates (as this will help us manage the pedestrian flow away from the school site).

## Ties

Year 8-10 students should wear the same colour tie this year as they wore in the previous academic year. All Year 7 students have been asked to wear a blue tie. New Year 11 ties will be available for students to purchase or exchange at the beginning of term.

- Year 11 students who would like to purchase their own tie can do so for £5.00.
- Alternatively, any student who would prefer to exchange a tie that is in good condition can do so and purchase a new Year 11 tie at the reduced cost of £2.50.

New Year 11 ties will be available before school, break and lunch time from their PSM's office. All Year 11 students should attend their first day of school wearing their old tie.

### **Uniform and Equipment**

All students should arrive to school in the correct school uniform. It is important that they arrive at the start of the new term ready to learn and with the correct equipment. As a minimum we expect students to bring with them:

- Two black biros.
- Two sharpened pencils.
- A ruler.
- An eraser.
- A compass and protractor.

If you have any concerns about acquiring the correct uniform or equipment for your child, you should contact the school before your child returns to school. Our community staff will do everything they can to help.

### **PE Kits**

There is no longer a need for students to wear their PE kits to school. The changing facilities have been improved over the summer holidays and all students can now safely change during the school day.

Year 7 students do not need to bring their PE Kit with them on 3 September.

### **Food**

The canteens will be open and offering a choice of hot and cold food from Friday 3 September. Purchases should be made using the ParentPay system. Parents who wish their child to access the canteens at either break or lunchtime should ensure they have added money to their child's account before the start of the school day. New Year 7 parents will receive Parentpay account details early next week, on Friday 3 September our canteen will accept cash payments from new Year 7 students only. As of Monday 6 September no cash payments will be accepted for any year group.

### **Additional Help**

If you require any more information before your child returns to school, please do not hesitate to contact their principal, whose email addresses are listed below.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Email Address</b>
7	Mrs Tucker	<a href="mailto:jackie.tucker@swale.at">jackie.tucker@swale.at</a>
8	Mr Richardson	<a href="mailto:darren.richardson@swale.at">darren.richardson@swale.at</a>
9	Mrs Giles	<a href="mailto:adelle.giles@swale.at">adelle.giles@swale.at</a>
10	Mr Cregeen	<a href="mailto:lee.cregeen@swale.at">lee.cregeen@swale.at</a>
11	Dr Clark	<a href="mailto:richard.clark@swale.at">richard.clark@swale.at</a>
12 & 13	Mrs Leverett	<a href="mailto:liz.leverett@swale.at">liz.leverett@swale.at</a>
	Miss Houlker	<a href="mailto:sonia.houlker@swale.at">sonia.houlker@swale.at</a>

Alternatively, you can contact the school's main office by phone or email.

We are looking forward to welcoming all our students back to school in September, in what we hope will be a more 'normal' school year.

Yours sincerely



Miss Honess  
Headteacher