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19th July 2021

Dear Parents

As the term draws to a close, I wanted to write to share some important information relevant for the coming days as well as highlighting some key information related to the start of the new school year in September.

Without question, this has been an extraordinary academic year. Our return last September saw, amongst other things, the separation of year groups, one-way systems, modified timetables and rearranged classrooms. The spring term was defined by the second national lockdown and students once again, working from home and accessing their learning remotely. In March, we turned our school into a COVID mass testing centre which heralded the much welcomed return to face-to-face teaching.

Changes to Contact Tracing

I know that for many of you, the impact of COVID restrictions has been keenly felt recently with a significant number of our students being required to isolate from school; a number on more than one occasion. As you know, from today, Monday 19th July and in line with step 4 of the government's roadmap, schools will no longer be asked to undertake routine contact tracing. Rather, this task will be administered by NHS Track and Trace. The DfE have shared a letter giving further information on these changes, [linked here](#).

As previously reported, we will be maintaining all other control measures in school until the end of term including the enhanced cleaning and hand sanitising, ventilation and the use of face coverings.

End of term matters

The term formally closes on Friday 23rd July and students will be dismissed at 12:30pm. School bus services have been informed accordingly.

At the end of the academic year, we say goodbye to a number of Oathall Staff; Miss Weynberg (Maths), Mrs Furniss and Mr Ashcroft (Cover supervision and faculty support), Mrs Roccliffe (MFL), Mrs Sweeting and Mrs Slater (Art & Design Technology), Miss Sullivan (English), Miss Stockley (MFL), Mr Van Galen (Music), Mrs Carter (Learning Support) and finally Mr Henri who leaves our MFL faculty after an extraordinary 22 years of service. I am sure that you would want to join me in extending my thanks to all departing staff sending them best wishes for the future.

Start of the autumn term

I would like to confirm some important dates and times for our September return. We are required to offer lateral flow COVID tests to all students at the start of term and therefore we will need to have a staggered start to accommodate this.

Thursday 2nd September	Staff Training
Friday 3rd September	Year 7 Testing and Induction Day Year 11 Testing only
Monday 6th September	Return for all year groups Testing only for Years 8 and 9
Tuesday 7th September	Full timetables followed for all year groups

To ensure the efficient administration of the COVID testing, tutor groups will be asked to arrive for testing at specific times. These will be published on our website in the coming days but may be subject to change so please do check the details again just prior to your child's return.

As was the case in March, testing is voluntary. The testing will be undertaken in the same manner as before. If you previously gave consent for this we do not need to ask you to give your consent again for this round of tests. If, however, you wish to change your consent either way, please complete a new consent form available [here](#) and return to consent@oathall.org as soon as possible but at least one week prior to the start of term.

Students will be expected to return in [full school uniform](#) and arrive [fully equipped](#) for learning.

Student timetables will be published via Insight from 2nd September, which will include tutor room details.

The restrictions placed upon the school last year have given us the opportunity to review a number of our procedures. Staggered breaks and lunchtimes have had a positive impact on school operations and we will be continuing with these arrangements next year. In order to support our new year-group based pastoral structure, the main tutor group session will now start the day for all year groups. The new timings of the school day can be seen [here](#); please note that registers will be called at 8:45am and the school day will end at 3:10pm as previously.

May I thank you for all of your support and patience this year. On behalf of the governors and staff of the college, may I wish you and your families a safe and restful summer.

E Rodriguez
Headteacher