



Bexley Grammar School
Danson Lane, Welling, Kent, DA16 2BL
A Specialist Language College and
IB World School
Tel: 020 8304 8538

Headteacher: Mr S C Elphick

e-mail: enquiries@bexleygs.co.uk

15th July 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

I have taken the opportunity to co-opt your usual reading time on a Thursday from the newsletter (which we will publish next week as the last edition of the year). Please bear with me - there is a great deal of information to share...

Next week

Our staggered early finish for the end of the year on Wednesday next week is as follows:

12.20 pm: Years 12, 10 & 9

12.30 pm: Years 7 & 8

Next academic year

You will be wanting to know all the arrangements for September too:

- **Testing:**
You may be aware that schools are being asked again to set up Test Centres and supervise two LFD self-tests by consenting students 3-5 days apart on their return to school in September. Students will then be expected to self-test at home again until at least the end of September when the government will review the situation.
- **Staggered return in September:**

Day	Year groups testing	Year groups remaining in school
Wednesday 1st September	INSET day	None
Thursday 2nd September	Test 1: 9, 10, 11 & 13	None - test and return home
Friday 3rd September	Test 1: 7, 8 & 12	7 & 12 only stay in school for induction (Y8 returns home).
Monday 6th September	Test 2: 9, 10, 11 & 13	All year groups in school at 8.30 am except Y12 - 9.00 am start.
Tuesday 7th September	Test 2: 7, 8 & 12	All year groups in school at 8.30 am.

From a parents' point of view therefore, your child will simply come into school at an appointment time (to be confirmed) on Thursday or Friday for their first test (no need for barcodes or the like this time) and then return home unless they are in years 7 or 12 - they will come to school on Friday and stay in school for an induction day. Normal school then begins on Monday 6th September for everyone at 8.30 am except year 12 who start at 9.00am. (Students will leave lessons for a short period for their second test over the course of Monday or Tuesday.)

- **The school day** is reverting back to normal with only minor changes in a staggered finish in order to keep the daily departure orderly and safe:
 - 8.30 am - 3.00 pm: Years 7, 8 & 9
 - 8.30 am - 3.10 pm: Years 10, 11, 12 & 13

- **Covid restrictions**

You will have heard, I am sure, that the government plan is that school life will return to something very close to normal in September. Schools have received specific guidance for this. In very brief summary:

- Bubbles are no longer recommended so break and lunch will be freer than they are at the moment;
- Assemblies can resume;
- Extracurricular activities will no longer be curtailed;
- Face coverings will no longer be advised (but could be recommended in specific circumstances - *students should still carry a face covering in September*);
- Educational visits can resume (overseas trips are permitted but are unlikely to be planned until there is more certainty about travel);
- More information regarding isolation and close contact tracing will be provided in September but essentially, the school will no longer trace close contacts (now identified by NHS Test and Trace) and students under 18 will no longer be required to self-isolate if they are identified as a close contact - only positive cases will have to self-isolate.

- **Ofsted Inspection due**

Finally, Ofsted will resume its programme of inspections in September. It has undertaken to "prioritise outstanding schools that were previously exempt from routine inspection that have gone the longest without a visit." BGS was last inspected formally in November 2007 as 'outstanding'; I am therefore confident that we are in the top ten in England for the category of those previously exempt schools that "have gone the longest without a visit."

I am also confident that we have gone from strength to strength in those nearly 14 years and we are eager to show our school at its best in the autumn should Ofsted visit; we are determined to retain the coveted 'outstanding' label which has become a greater challenge in recent years compared to what it was in 2007; that judgement opens many doors which we have come to expect now and we would lose some freedoms if we were downgraded.

My staff and I have received numerous emails of thanks, appreciation and support from you over the years and particularly in this recent period dominated by the pandemic. We have been very moved by some of these deeply felt thanks. One way you can both show your appreciation for our work and support the school in the event of an inspection is to complete the Ofsted [Parent View](#) survey that is always available. To do that now, as we finish the school year, would provide a rich evidence base for Ofsted when it carries out its pre-inspection data scrutiny. You will

recognise several questions that we ask regularly in our parents' evening questionnaires by which we monitor and evaluate our performance through your views. Please give 5 or 10 minutes of your time using the link above. (You will be asked to provide an email address as validation so that the site is not misused.)

We will fill in some of the details for the start of term in due course but I hope this rather lengthy letter preempts many of the questions you may have as we look forward to the academic year 2021-2022.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'SE Elphick', written in a cursive style.

Steve Elphick