

Tuesday 1st September

Dear parents,

Welcome back to the new school year! We've been working hard throughout the summer to make sure we are all ready and we are so looking forward to having everyone back together again safely on site as one big community. We are confident that the school is organised in a safe way and we are ready to give your child a great start to the year.

Over the last few weeks we have been celebrating our pupils' success at the end of Year 11 and Year 13. Although across the country the exam grades received a lot of attention about how they were awarded, our pupils' focus was on the opportunities that these qualifications open up and, crucially for Year 13 the universities that they can attend. We were very pleased to have a record-breaking year of entry to super selective universities, the top ten in the country, with 30% of our departing pupils gaining entry to Warwick, LSE, UCL and Oxford. 80% of our pupils gained entry to a selective university. Through the challenges of the year, we are inspired by these pupils' success.

September return to school for all pupils in all year groups

We look forward to welcoming all pupils back on-site to school next week. The government has confirmed that all pupils must return to school regardless of whether they were previously shielding or members of their household were. It is now illegal again to not send your child to school unless they are too ill to attend or are self-isolating or quarantining according to government guidance. We will refer families to the Local Authority who do not follow the rules.

We know that some parents might still be feeling nervous about a full return to school. Please read the new Covid-19 section of the website on the parents pages found [here](#).

Quarantining guidance

Please be mindful that for many countries the quarantine remains in place, meaning your family would need to self-isolate for 14 days before returning to school. Full details can be found here of which countries are affected: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-advice-novel-coronavirus>. If you are concerned your family may be in this situation, please contact the school urgently to discuss your circumstances.

Pupils who need to quarantine will have their absence authorised, so long as parents can provide evidence of flights from a country on the quarantine list. This means you would not be in trouble for keeping your child(ren) at home for this period – you would be doing it in order to protect the rest of the community.

Testing

A reminder that if your child or anyone in your household shows any symptoms of Covid-19 (temperature, new and persistent cough, loss of smell or taste) then you must not come to school and you must get tested immediately. Your child's absence will be authorised with evidence of a positive test. It is no longer an option to keep your child at home 'just in case.'

Information about how to get tested is all on the website [here](#).

When is my child coming back to school?

In Primary, families have been written to personally with details of their start date, either Monday or Wednesday next week. If you have not received this communication or are unclear on your child's start date, please email parents@kingsolomonacademy.org.

In Secondary, the first days back are as follows, with different year groups starting on different days:

	First day back
Monday 7 th September 2020	Year 7
	Year 12
Wednesday 9 th September 2020	Year 10
	Year 13
Thursday 10 th September 2020	Year 8
	Year 9
Friday 11 th September 2020	Year 11

Staffing update

Phoebe Matthews, primary Assistant Principal, has started a new role as a Tutor for Ark Teacher Training so will not be rejoining us at KSA. Whilst we will certainly miss her, we wish her well in this new role and are pleased for the rest of the Ark network who will benefit from her knowledge and expertise in teacher development.

We are delighted to announce Skai Becker has been successfully appointed as Acting Assistant Principal, leading Y2-Y4. Ms. Stone will be teaching 4 Goldsmiths (was 3 Birmingham last year) instead of Ms. Becker alongside Ms. Juckes. Ms. Stone has been a KSA primary teacher for the last three years teaching in Year 5 and Year 6 and PE on YYS. She was going to be moving into teaching secondary PE and Juniors interventions but is excited to have her own class in Year 4 instead!

A reminder that Ms. Humphreys begins her maternity leave at the end of September so Ms. Deeks starts the term as Head of Primary up to Year 6.

Remember, you can find details of class teachers and year group leadership [here](#). Primary teachers all made welcome videos for their new classes which you can watch [here](#).

Breakfast club and after school provision

The parent survey requesting a place in breakfast club for both YYS and OYS closed on Friday. If you have an urgent request for a place please contact parents@kingsolomonacademy.org as soon as possible. We are not able to accommodate every request for breakfast club due to distancing safety measures and staffing capacity – we will be in touch with all parents by the end of the week to confirm if it is possible for your child(ren) to have a place.

We are running a very small provision for primary after school care for parents who require it for work. Please contact parents@kingsolomonacademy.org if you need a place.

School meals

Whilst we continue to look for every possible opportunity to ensure pupils' health and safety during the Covid pandemic, we will continue to serve packed lunches in classrooms for all pupils from Nursery to Year 9. Whilst the cost of providing a packed lunch is somewhat higher than a hot centrally served option and creates significantly more work for the kitchen staff, the school is covering this difference in cost and capacity as we are confident the food is filling and nutritious and this is the safest possible way of organising lunch for pupils in class bubbles. We will review the provision again ahead of HT2.

Pupils in Year 10-13 are in year group bubbles so are therefore able to eat in the hall, and observe appropriate distancing measures so as to continue to eat a hot meal each day.

Parents of children in Year 3 now have to start paying for school meals

The government pays for universal free school meals for all children in Reception and Key Stage One. In Year 3, families who are not eligible for Free School Meals must start paying £2 a day for their child's meal. This is paid through your Parent Pay account. Please address any questions to Cheryl Francis on c.francis@kingsolomonacademy.org

Face coverings

Government guidance on face coverings has been updated recently, it can be found [here](#). It has changed significantly from last term where face coverings were discouraged for both staff and pupils in educational settings. There has also been a significant change in the expectations around face covering in wider society. As a result, we have updated our expectations.

Secondary Pupil Face Coverings

Sixth formers **must wear face coverings** in communal areas and in corridors and are free to choose to wear them in classrooms and outside. Year 7 - Year 11 pupils **must wear face coverings** outside of classrooms (e.g. transitions), and can wear them outside if they wish, but are not expected to wear them in class. Face covering colour: must be plain: black, blue, white or grey. Face coverings are part of the expected uniform / equipment. Please ensure your child has an appropriate face covering and a clean/safe way of storing it when it is not worn. Government guidance is found [here](#). If Sixth Formers or Secondary pupils do not come to school with a mask, they will be given a disposable one on the first day and their parent contacted to inform them. If they are without a mask repeatedly, they will continue to be given a disposable mask, but this will be treated as disorganisation and addressed in a similar way to other missing uniform or equipment and their parents informed.

Primary Pupil Face Coverings

We do not expect any primary pupils to be wearing face coverings at any time because of the nature of primary bubbling and the other control measures in place.

Staff Face Coverings

Staff delivering first aid must wear protective equipment, including face covering. Staff may wear face coverings at any time if they choose to. If a staff member is inside (but not in a classroom with pupils) and cannot guarantee 2m distancing they must wear a face covering, e.g. all staff are expected to wear a face covering in corridors. Staff on outdoor transitions or at outside break/play time or for those having lunch outside should have a face covering and gloves on their person in case you need to go into close proximity with a pupil in need (e.g. first aid, needing to physically intervene). If staff would prefer to be wearing face covering and gloves on any transitions/duties outside, they are welcome to. In enclosed spaces (e.g. offices and staffrooms) staff must wear a face covering if it is not possible to guarantee they can appropriately distance.

Because of distancing and other hazard control measures, and the negative impact on education of covering the face, we do not expect staff to wear face coverings in classrooms when working with pupils.

Parent and Visitor face coverings

Parents dropping off and picking up their children are not in an enclosed space and are therefore not expected to wear a face covering – of course some parents may choose to wear one and are welcome to do so. In the exceptional situation where parents are in the buildings or any exceptional visitors are in the buildings, they must wear face coverings.

Bags, reading books and homework resources

Whilst we will continue to encourage pupils to bring as little as possible to and from school, pupils will be expected to start bringing their bags back each day with their daily reading book(s) and, in primary, their homework books – which are checked every day and form an important part of the curriculum.

Primary Summer Holiday Challenges

All children in primary were expected to read every single day of the holidays. In addition, we gave every child a home learning pack for the Summer. None of these challenges are compulsory for any children but many parents told us that they would like to keep up the consistency of a little bit of learning through some fun activities each day to try and maintain a good structure. Do send in photos of your children's efforts to their new class teachers or to parents@Kingsolomonacademy.org so we can see their successes! You can access all the Summer holiday projects on the website [here](#).

Secondary Holiday Homework

We set **Holiday Homework** for pupils in Year 7-10 and 12. All work was set online via Student Share and MS Teams, and is due to be **submitted online on Friday 4th September** (before we return to school).

Holiday Homework in Years 7-10 was set for each subject in the 'must', 'should', 'could' format and the 'must' tasks should be equivalent to a normal school week of homework. Pupils can challenge themselves by taking on the 'should' and 'could' tasks.

Year 12 pupils were set 'Core', 'Consolidation' and 'Stretch' tasks for each of their subjects which should take approximately 20 hours, which we suggested they spread across the subject to ensure that they retain as much knowledge as possible.

Thank you in advance for supporting pupils to organise their time effectively and make sure they complete their Holiday Homework to the best of their ability by **Friday 4th September**.

Laptops and chrome books currently on loan to pupils

A small number of pupils have KSA laptops and chrome books at home for home learning. We need these to be returned ahead of the new academic year as we use them in lessons on the Older Years Site as part of the normal curriculum. Please **return them to the Older Years Site as soon as possible as we need them for children to use in their lessons**. On return, we will check that they are in working order, and sign the devices back onto site.

String Instruments

We would like all instruments to return to school on your child's first day back so that we can conduct an accurate inventory and make sure all pupils have the correct size instrument for the new academic year. If your child has a King Solomon Academy string instrument at home they should bring it into school on their first day and give it to Ms Scully in the main foyer in the OYS. It is vital that this happens as requested so we can have a smooth start to strings learning this year. If you have any queries please email Mr Mvula (t.mvula@kingsolomonacademy.org) and Ms Scully (R.scully@kingsolomonacademy.org)

Virtual Getting to Know You Dinners

Many parents will know that we usually run a Getting to Know You Dinner for all parents and staff to get to know each other, share food together and make sure everyone is clear on the important things to know for the year ahead in each year group.

Whilst we clearly can't run these events in person at the moment, we are committed to ensuring parents get to 'meet' their year team staff as soon as possible in the new term on an online Teams meeting. We do expect every parent to make every effort to be present.

The session will include: getting to know the staff on the team, seeing the pupils' classrooms and key learning spaces, getting year group specific information about the start of the school year including new routines etc as well as an introduction to this half term's curriculum.

Please hold this time in your diaries – we will send out Teams calendar invites later this week.

We look forward to seeing you all there.

	When?
Nursery	5-5.40pm on Wednesday 16 th September
Reception	5-5.40pm on Tuesday 15 th September
Year 1	5-5.40pm on Thursday 17 th September
Year 2	5-5.40pm on Friday 18 th September
Year 3	5-5.40pm on Wednesday 23 rd September
Year 4	5-5.40pm on Tuesday 22 nd September
Year 5	5-5.40pm on Monday 14 th September
Year 6	5-5.40pm on Monday 21 st September
Year 7	5-5.40pm on Tuesday 22 nd September
Year 8	5-5.40pm on Tuesday 29 th September
Year 9	5-5.40pm on Thursday 24 th September
Year 10	5-5.40pm on Wednesday 23 rd September
Year 11	5-5.40pm on Thursday 17 th September
Year 12	5-5.40pm on Wednesday 16 th September
Year 13	5-5.40pm on Wednesday 30 th September