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Dear Parent/Carer,

28 August 2020

As the new academic year rapidly approaches, we are very pleased to welcome new parents and students to Bay House in addition to those who are moving into the Sixth Form following the conclusion of their studies in the Main School. We appreciate that this has been an incredibly challenging summer for all those who were due to sit GCSE examinations this year and know that students are looking forward to commencing their A-Level study this term.

Lower Sixth students will be welcomed by their tutors on **Friday 4th September**. In order for this to run as smoothly as possible we are staggering the arrival of students. Therefore, each student will receive an email notifying them of the precise time they should arrive in the morning. All students must enter via the Stanley Park Gate where they will be greeted by members of staff who will direct them to their tutor on the tennis courts at the rear of the school.

During this tutor session students will meet with the other members of their tutor group, receive their timetables and have an opportunity to familiarise themselves with the school site. In addition to key messages delivered by the Sixth Form Team, important information will be shared regarding the safety measures being put in place to prevent the spread of coronavirus. All students will then depart the site by 13:00 at the latest.

**Lower Sixth lessons will commence during the afternoon of Tuesday 8th September.** This is to ensure that each year group is able to examine the adaptations which have been made to the school site. From this point onwards students will be expected to follow their new timetables.

It is necessary to make some significant changes to the school day due to the size of our school community, the need to stagger start and finish times, as well as break and lunchtimes. Sixth Form students will receive two 2.5 hour lessons in each subject every week. This will mean that students will be provided with 10 hours of face-to-face tuition in each subject every fortnight. This is an increase from the 9 hours of lessons in each subject which students received during previous years. In order to meet the guidelines set by the government and to deliver the increase in the number of teaching hours, the vast majority of Lower Sixth students will not be allocated lessons on a Monday. This has also meant that enrichment activities will need to be temporarily suspended until we receive confirmation that some of the social distancing measures can be lifted. A reduced food service will be offered in the Common Room however students are encouraged to bring their own packed lunch wherever possible.

We would like to stress that the timetable will be under constant review and that alterations may need to be made to ensure that we comply with the latest guidance provided by the Department for Education. Therefore, students should not be participating in paid employment during the school day. Whilst we understand the numerous benefits to students engaging in part time employment these commitments should not be greater than 10-12 hours each week. We would like to take this opportunity to remind you that success at A-Level is also heavily dependent upon independent study outside of the classroom. Students in the Lower Sixth are required to complete **4-5 hours of home learning in each subject every week** and it is vital that they have sufficient time to tackle this work.

For those students who require a quiet working environment or access to specialist equipment study venues will be available in school. However, in order to adhere to the guidelines provided by the Department for Education, registered study periods will not take place at the start of the term. Students are therefore encouraged to leave the school site when they are not required to attend tutor time or lessons. We would like to stress that silent study spaces will still be available for those students who require them.

The World Health Organisation published a statement on August 21st about children and face coverings. They now advise that “children aged 12 and over should wear a mask under the same conditions as adults, in particular when they cannot guarantee at least a 1-metre distance from others and there is widespread transmission in the area.”

In line with government guidance, in GFM schools where Year 7 and above are educated, we encourage face coverings to be worn by adults and pupils when moving around, such as in corridors and indoor communal areas where social distancing is difficult to maintain. It will not usually be necessary to wear face coverings in the classroom, where protective measures already mean the risks are lower, and they may inhibit teaching and learning.

We believe that our students will now have access to face coverings due to their increasing use in wider society, and Public Health England has made available resources on how to make a simple face covering. However, where anybody is struggling to access a face covering, or where they are unable to use their face covering due to having forgotten it or it having become soiled or unsafe, we will have a small contingency supply available to meet such needs.

Some individuals are exempt from wearing face coverings. For example people who cannot put on, wear or remove a face covering because of a physical or mental illness or impairment, or disability, or if they are speaking to or providing assistance to someone who relies on lip reading, clear sound or facial expression to communicate. The same exemptions will apply in GFM schools, and our teachers and other staff will be sensitive to those needs.

We understand that some of these changes are significantly different from the usual programme of study offered in the Sixth Form. However, we are pleased to be able to provide students with their full allocation of teacher time from the beginning of this academic year. We appreciate that there will be concerns due to the lack of tuition that students received during the period of school closures. As always teaching staff will be supporting students as they make the difficult transition from GCSE to A-Level study.

We are looking forward to working with our new cohort of students and are very pleased that they have taken the decision to join the Sixth Form at Bay House. We will be writing to you again shortly after the start of the term to provide you with further important updates.

Kind regards,



Mr R Dadd  
Head of Sixth Form