



RETURNING TO ST DUNSTAN'S COLLEGE

YOUR SAFETY AND WELLBEING IS IMPORTANT TO US



A guide outlining the measures the College has taken, and continues to take, in planning for the opening of its site operations

We have missed the buzz of normal life at St Dunstan's during lockdown, and we want to get back to normal as soon as it is safe to do so! We are currently planning for the full opening of College sites in September 2020



St Dunstan's
College

FROM THE HEAD



Dear Parents, Carers and Pupils

The coronavirus pandemic has presented unprecedented challenges for us all; challenges that at St Dunstan's we have met with characteristic creativity, courage and compassion.

We have learnt a great deal over the past weeks and months. We have developed and refined a remote learning strategy, that we believe presents the very best of the education we are able to provide by virtual means. We have made significant adjustments to our sites, and ways of working, to facilitate the safe return of dozens of pupils to St Dunstan's, in line with Government guidance. We have continued to provide pastoral and educational support to individuals most in need. We have supported our staff, providing a flexible and understanding approach to the individual challenges they are facing. We have continued with our ambitious construction project, that is so important to the ongoing success of St Dunstan's.

I am proud of how proactive we have been in our planning and communication. We were one of the first schools in the area to adopt a comprehensive remote learning strategy. I have communicated with parents and pupils weekly, throughout the course of the pandemic, to provide updates on all areas of our operation and planning. We have a dedicated coronavirus support page on our website. We have been forensic in our approach to site safety and associated risk assessments.

This document is designed to provide both current and in-coming parents and pupils with an outline of all we have currently in place to support the safe return of pupils to College. It also outlines the plans we are putting in place to facilitate what we very much hope will be a full College return in September. I hope that it answers all of your questions, and you can go into the summer holiday reassured by all we are doing at St Dunstan's. Clearly, the landscape is constantly changing, and there are no certainties as to the nature of our September operation. I therefore intend to next write to all College parents on Friday 21 August, outlining the decisions that have been taken regarding our return for the new academic year. If there is a need to do so, I will write to you with an interim announcement on Friday 7 August. Otherwise, I do not expect there to be further formal communication from the College after the end of term.

I hope that you are reassured both by our ability to thrive in the event of remote learning, as much as you are by our intent to return to College site operation, safely, as soon as possible. If we are permitted to do so, I will fully open the College in September.

Yours sincerely

Mr N P Hewlett
Headmaster

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Wellbeing and Pastoral Care

How will you ensure that the pupils socially and emotionally readjust after all this time?

Pupils who have already returned to College have been delighted to see their friends after all this time, and have pleasingly settled quickly back into school routines. This being said, we are very mindful that lockdown has been extremely traumatic for some children, and so our full counselling service and pastoral support team are on hand to support pupils who are struggling. We will use tutor time (Senior School) and Form Time (Junior School) to support social interaction, and teachers will be mindful of the emotional wellbeing of all the children, alerting the pastoral team, and parents or carers, if they have any concerns, or feel additional support is needed.

What will happen if my child is now too anxious to return to school?

If your child is feeling particularly anxious about returning to school, please contact the relevant pastoral team, who will be happy to discuss the best way forward to support your child. We hope that, through discussion and putting in place a plan for support, all pupils will quickly feel confident to return to St Dunstan's.

What will happen if I don't feel comfortable with my child attending school?

It is very much our hope that all parents will feel reassured by the extensive planning and preparation the College has undertaken to make its sites as safe as possible. However, if you do not feel comfortable with your child attending school,

please contact the relevant pastoral team, who will be happy to discuss the protective measures in place within school and any specific concerns you may have. They will also be able to discuss with you the latest guidance from the Department for Education, on attendance management and expectations, as well as any remote learning support that we may be able to put in place, if required.

How will you support pupils with particular health or learning needs?

Where you feel that the return to College may present a particular challenge to your child, due to their individual needs, please get in touch with the relevant pastoral team, SENDCo or College Nurse, who will be happy to discuss how best to support your child upon their return.

My child is new to the school - how will you help them to settle-in?

We will run our usual programme of induction for all pupils new to the College, which will help them to get to know their teachers and peers, and also get used to our routines and procedures. We will also make sure that new pupils are prioritised, so that they fully understand how our remote learning offering works and how to access it to best effect, should that become necessary. We fully intend to host all relevant welcome evenings for new parents, whether remote or in school, providing you with an early opportunity to meet the team responsible for your child's ongoing care throughout the course of the year.



Academic Matters

How will you ensure that the pupils academically catch-up and readjust after all this time?

We are very mindful that remote learning has been academically challenging for some pupils, and we are actively planning for the return to school to include clear adjustments from teachers to support this. In particular, we will be asking teachers to scaffold lessons more gradually than usual, in terms of expectations, sanctions, and lesson pace, including building in time for consolidation of previous year's work more explicitly than would normally be the case. As always, where any pupil or group of pupils are in need of further and targeted academic intervention, we will make provision for this in our timetable.

What is the timetable likely to look like in September?

We have planned for a full timetable from September, and have not currently made adjustments to it. If remote learning does become necessary again, in all or in part, we intend to still maintain the timetable as written in the Senior School. In the Junior School, we would revert to the successful bespoke timetable currently in place for remote provision, with the likely addition of increased live teaching.

Will you adjust the times of the school day to avoid rush hours?

We hope that this will not be necessary, as we want to maintain our full timetable, however we will review this, in line with guidance, over the summer, and update you in August. We are fortunate to have a long school day, which does provide us with flexibility to adjust timings, should we need or want to do so.

What is happening with exam results days?

Our results days this year will happen remotely. There will be a team of staff on site, who will be able to offer pupils full support, remotely, as necessary. Full details will be sent separately to these year groups by the end of this term.

What is happening with end of year exams?

Only Year 10 and Year 12 will be undertaking formal end of year exams. Details of these arrangements have been sent separately to these year groups.

What happens if I want to appeal my public exam results?

Ofqual have instructed that there will not be an opportunity for pupils to challenge the grade awarded to them by exam boards in the summer, which would include their centre assessment grade, or their position in rank orders. However, pupils will be able to ask us, as their exam centre, to check whether we made an error when submitting data to exam boards. If a pupil has evidence of bias, or evidence that they were discriminated against during our internal process, parents are able to raise this through our Complaints Policy, and would also be able to pass on such evidence to exam boards, as potential malpractice. As such, any appeal would focus on whether the right data was used and correctly applied, and not on exam boards' or teachers' professional judgments. We remain confident that our internal process was thorough, rigorous, and scrutinised at all levels, and included due regard for all such matters.

What will happen if teachers become unwell or have to self-isolate?

If a member of staff displays any symptoms of Coronavirus they will return home immediately and follow the appropriate self-isolation guidance. Parents will be notified if their child's teacher has been tested positive for the virus. Classes will be covered appropriately.

If my child is required to self-isolate, will they still be able to access lessons?

Where pupils must self-isolate, we are committed to continuing their education through interactive and remote teaching and learning, as much as is practicable.

In the Junior School, will specialist lessons take place in September if children are still in bubble groups?

If children are remaining in bubble groups, specialist lessons will take place in their classroom base (and not specialist rooms) and taught by specialist teachers.



The Health & Safety of our Sites

What happens if there is a case of Covid 19 in the school?

We will strictly follow government guidance on this matter. In line with current guidance, any pupil with Coronavirus symptoms will remain in our dedicated isolation room, with a qualified nurse and/or first aiders, until their parents can collect them safely. Once at home, they are currently required to self-isolate for 7 days, and should arrange to have a test. This can be organised by visiting NHS.UK or dialling 111; all staff and pupils attending an education or childcare setting have access to a test, if they display symptoms. Members of the household are currently also advised to self-isolate for 14 days. If the test results are negative, they can return to the College, and household members can end their isolation. If the result is positive, the rest of their class or bubble group will be notified and advised to self-isolate for 14 days. Household members of the bubble group do not need to self-isolate.

What happens if my child has no choice but to use public transport?

Pupils and staff are encouraged to walk, cycle or travel by car to school, however we appreciate that this may not always be possible. If public transport is your only option, and in line with current guidance, you will need to wear appropriate PPE which, as a minimum, should include a face mask.

Will lunch still be available?

We are planning and preparing for the return of a full catering provision, with a range of high quality, healthy, hot meals being provided each day. We believe this will be possible with the tried and tested measures we already have in place, to reduce risks of cross contamination, through physical distancing and additional screen protections. We will, however, continue to monitor Government advice and respond appropriately. Parents will be notified in plenty of time should this situation change.

Will access to toilets and communal areas be controlled to protect the integrity of bubble groups?

It is likely that the areas pupils are allowed to access during break and lunch times will be limited, and staff supervision of those areas may be different to our usual procedures. We are currently considering how best to deploy staff on duty, particularly during break and lunch times, to support

the integrity of bubble groups and remind pupils of social distancing, where appropriate. We are also currently considering the logistical arrangements and potential supervision for the use of toilets, both during lessons and at break and lunch times, to ensure that there is reduced mixing between bubble groups and social distancing is in place where appropriate. While the weather remains nice, it is our firm intention to ensure outdoor recreation remains the default, as much as is possible.

Can my child bring snacks / their own water bottle to lessons?

Yes, children will be expected to bring their own water bottles, and access to fresh drinking water will be provided in the Refectory, so that pupils can refill bottles throughout the day. Water fountains will not be usable. To ensure that we are able to maintain bubble groups and social distancing, we are not currently planning to open the Refectory for Senior School students to purchase snacks at break time. We will therefore allow these students to bring in their own healthy snacks from home to eat at break time, if required. These should not contain nuts. We will keep this under review and will resume break time service when appropriate to do so. We hope to be able to offer a breakfast service, as we know that this is greatly valued by a number of pupils. We will ask that pupils sign up for the breakfast service in advance, so that we can control numbers and social distancing within the Refectory. In the Junior School, all pupils (both Pre-Prep and Prep) will continue to bring in their own healthy, nut-free snack until further notice.

How will you manage cross-contamination of stationery and other classroom equipment?

Pupils will be expected to bring in their own pencil cases and equipment, and must not share or borrow other pupils' belongings. Teachers and support staff will endeavour to clean curriculum resources provided by the College, such as toys, textbooks and practical equipment, after use, by using antibacterial wipes.

How are you going to make sure my child washes their hands regularly?

All staff and pupils will be expected to wash their hands upon arrival and regularly throughout the day. Hand sanitisers are also positioned in all common areas around the College. Teachers will remind children throughout the day on the importance of regular hand washing, including an instruction before lunch. Staff on duty will talk to children who are using the bathrooms about the importance of good hygiene, where appropriate. The latest hand

washing Government posters are on display around the College.

How are you going to keep the College from getting stuffy and keep the air flowing?

All classroom doors and windows will remain open, with appropriate measures in place in the event of lockdown or evacuation. Air conditioning units will not be in operation, to reduce any risk of cross contamination.

How will you reduce the risk of cross contamination?

A number of key property staff have completed specific external training on how to clean the College appropriately. Cleaning procedures have been changed significantly and common touch points, such as door handles, light switches, bannisters and desks, as well as common areas, are being cleaned throughout the day. Thorough cleaning of all common areas is completed twice daily.

Can I wear a face mask and / or gloves?

We will actively support pupils, teachers and parents who wish to use PPE while on the College sites. We appreciate that each individual will have their own thoughts and priorities on this matter and, as such, the College will encourage people to do what makes them feel safe.

Will you complete temperature checks upon arrival?

As research suggests that many children do not display a temperature with Covid 19, but may indicate a range of other more common illnesses, we have decided not to temperature check, unless a child feels unwell.

Do you have access to handwashing facilities and anti-bacterial hand sanitisers?

All Staff and pupils will be expected to wash their hands upon arrival and regularly throughout the day. Hand sanitisers are also positioned in all common areas around the College, and in a number of classrooms.

Do you have facilities for medical attention and isolation in the event of an expected outbreak?

The College's Wellness Centre, managed by our fully qualified nurse, Mrs Watson, is fully equipped for first aid and medical treatment. This facility also includes a complete separate area for isolation, should it be required. Discussions with the Chaplain, Counsellors, Tutors or our designated Safeguarding Lead will all be available, whenever assistance is needed.

What should a pupil do if they feel unwell whilst at the College?

Pupils simply need to let their teacher, or any member of staff, know if they are feeling unwell. The College has a significant number of qualified first aiders, in addition to the Medical Team who are located in the Wellness Centre and led by a full time, qualified nurse.

Where is the nearest hospital?

The University Hospital Lewisham is only 1 mile away, which is a 5-10 minute drive from the College.

What are the arrangements for September and what will you do if there is another lockdown?

We are very proud of our remote learning provision and we are ready to revert to it, in whole or in part, as necessary.

How will you manage the beginning and end of the school day to avoid overcrowding on the drives and commutes?

We are currently considering how to manage the beginning and end of the school day to avoid overcrowding. This may involve staggered arrival and departure times, and the use of different access points by different members of the community. This has worked successfully as we have welcomed pupils back to school during the Trinity Term and we are already using floor markings to indicate social distancing on the approaches to the College buildings and within the corridors.

How will you manage lunch times?

Thanks to our fantastic caterers, Holroyd Howe, we have continued to provide hot meals for pupils during lockdown. This has been achieved by physical distancing measures, screens and appropriate PPE. We believe that children sitting and eating a healthy lunch with their friends is an extremely important part of the day so we intend on continuing to offer this provision from September, as long as we can comply with the latest guidance at that time.

How will you ensure that physical distancing is followed?

We will continue to follow physical distancing guidance through thorough site signage and marking, as well as staffing the site to assist in monitoring. Classroom layout will be adjusted to conform with social distancing guidelines.

Will class sizes change?

We will continue to follow government guidance on this matter. Class sizes will depend largely on the social distancing rules that are in place, as well as how we can most effectively 'bubble' the children. At this point it is not possible to say whether class sizes will change in September, but we know from our experience thus far that we can accommodate smaller classes, within reason.

Will you allow visitors in the College?

Whilst the majority of visitors will be asked to meet with staff 'virtually', those that need to access the College will be expected to wash their hands upon arrival and to adhere to the social distancing guidelines.

Will pupils be able to wear home clothes each day to aid with washing?

This is something we are actively considering and we will provide a clear steer in August, in line with guidance.



Co-Curricular (Forder)

Will we continue to have exciting Forder activities on offer?

Yes, we fully intend to have a full range of co-curricular activities on offer, and we will adjust these as needed, to conform with necessary social distancing requirements. We are in the process of planning for a full launch in September.

Will music lessons continue to take place?

We have been and continue to be supportive of remote music lessons and feedback from parents on these has been positive. We are currently expecting to continue with this format in September, but will clearly revert back to face to face lessons, as soon as we are safely able to do so.

Will competitive sports be re-introduced?

It looks unlikely that competitive sport as we knew it previously will be back in time for the start of Michaelmas Term. Our Sports Department have been active participants in regular virtual meetings of the professional body for Directors of Sport, who are discussing the impact of government guidance on sport in schools. Regardless of where we are in September, we will be working with other schools to find creative ways of keeping pupils active and able to access sporting competition in a safe and appropriate way.

Are any trips going to happen?

We fully recognise the importance of trips for pupil

development, and are committed to getting back to a full programme as soon as we are safely able to do so. We won't be asking parents to make any financial contribution to trips until we are certain that they will be able to go ahead.

Will House activities happen?

Our programme of remote House activities has been a big success this term, with Heads of Houses reporting excellent engagement from our current pupils. We have planned a full calendar of House Competitions in preparation for being back in the Michaelmas Term, but we are prepared to continue with our remote offering if circumstances dictate that we need to do so.

What will happen to cancelled D of E expeditions?

All trips that parents had made financial commitments to, should now have been refunded. We have been holding DofE deposits on the grounds that expeditions are being postponed, rather than cancelled. If we make the decision that no expeditions will be able to go ahead in Michaelmas term, then we will refund deposits before the summer break. It is worth noting that some of the money paid by parents is for the DofE license, which is non-refundable. We are only able to refund expedition costs.

Travel, Holidays and Quarantine

What do we do if we have a summer holiday booked?

You must take your own decision over whether or not you take a summer holiday, but we do ask that you remain vigilant over the quarantine guidance and that you do not come back to school before the stated quarantine period has lapsed.

What transportation will be available from September?

We are currently working with our transport providers to find a solution that maintains our bus routes. Full updates on this will be provided in the August communication.



Finances

How are the finances of the College coping in this pandemic?

We are in a strong place. Demand for places at the College has never been higher. Our building works continue and we are confident for our future. Where families are struggling as a consequence of Covid 19, we are doing everything we can to offer flexibility and support.

If School does not resume in September, will there be a discount in fees?

We are planning for the College sites to be fully open from September and therefore full fees will be charged. Should we not be able to realise this intention and have to revert to remote learning, we will actively consider appropriate fee remissions, as we have done throughout this pandemic.

Communications

What communications should we expect from you before September?

Announcements arrive from Government daily. Although we expect this to slow over the summer period, we will be ensuring that the College Leadership Team continues to monitor all changes in guidance, as they emerge. We do not feel it is sustainable or helpful to send you regular communication across the summer holiday, but we will send you a comprehensive update on our position on Friday 21 August, and, in addition, on Friday 7 August, should that be necessary. Until that point, it is our intention to fully reopen the College sites in September, and we are planning for this eventuality. In the event that we are not allowed to do this, and / or we cannot do so safely, we will revert to what is now our well-developed remote learning strategy, either fully or in part.

Communications during Covid 19 have been excellent – will this continue?

We have been so grateful to you for your feedback on the recent survey. We have considered what you have said and are going to continue with a weekly bulletin to all parents sent, with links, in one email to you each week. The Headmaster will also write a letter to you weekly, as part of this bulletin. In addition to this, the parent portal, hosted by iSAMS, will be comprehensively reviewed, so that it can more effectively store your data and information pertaining to your child, as well as letters, but in a user-friendly way.



St Dunstan's

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