



THE THOMAS LORD AUDLEY SCHOOL

Part of The Sigma Trust

Headteacher: Helena Boast BA MEd

11 September 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

I am writing to update you further about arrangements in school. We have been very pleased about how our students have returned to school. The new Year 7 students have settled in brilliantly and have really impressed their new teachers. Students from all other year groups have made an excellent start too. They have embraced the new arrangements and routines very well and there has been a positive atmosphere around the school with students working hard within their lessons. As we become more familiar with the new procedures in school, it has become necessary to provide further information to you.

Arriving at School

In order for us to be able to manage a safe arrival on to the school site, please remember the only access points are the School Road gates and the gates at the turning circle. Each year group has separate access routes into school, which we then monitor the students hand washing; please ensure that your child arrives at school no earlier than 8.20am and no later than 8.30am, so that we can ensure supervision is in place.

Gathering in large groups on the way to or from school

From Monday 14 September the Government has made changes to law that prohibit gatherings of more than six people. It is now even more important that students do not gather together with groups of friends on the way to or from school. This is to help to keep them all safe as well as reducing the risk of spreading the Coronavirus. We are actively reminding the students in school about the need to follow the guidance so that we can all play our part in limiting the spread of infection..

Bus Transport

As those of you whose children use a bus will know, the bus provision arranged by Essex County Council has been problematic this year. This has been exacerbated by the restrictions on bus travel caused by the Coronavirus school guidance. We have been working hard with the ECC and the bus companies to improve the provision. This has led to an additional bus being provided for students travelling on the Mersea route and a change of arrangements including an additional bus for the Rowhedge route.

One of the mandatory guidelines for bus travel is that all students using a bus must wear a face covering. We supervise students getting on the bus at the end of the school day and can see that most students are wearing a face covering, however, several of the drivers have informed us that students are removing their face covering on the journey to or from school. Please provide your child with a face covering and remind them that they should wear face covering, if travelling by bus.

Drinking Water

As we now have separate areas of the school for each year group the supply of drinking water has become more problematic than normal. Some areas of the school do not have drinking water taps. We are able to transport water into each area of the school and have arranged additional resources to make this as easy



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possible. In order to ensure all students have access to water during the day, please ensure your child attends school with their own water bottle. We will have water available during the day at each catering facility and within year group bubbles, but if students bring their own water bottle, the queue for students filling bottles at break or lunch will be reduced.

Homework

As a result of restrictions in place concerning cross contamination caused by contacting surfaces touched by others, schools are not able to set homework in the same way. We are currently reviewing what is possible for each department with each year group. It is likely that we will have a variety of approaches to the setting of homework and will communicate the details in the next few weeks. We had high levels of engagement with the work set using Google Classrooms during the lockdown period and will continue to use this facility to share homework with students.

Remote Learning

The guidance for school is clear that from the end of September, remote learning needs to be available for students who are self-isolating because they or a member of their household has had a positive Coronavirus test or if there is a partial or full closure of the school because of Coronavirus outbreaks. We have already started to produce our plan to provide remote learning in these circumstances. For students who have to isolate in September, we will be placing details about accessing learning from home on our website's "September" page. (See link on homepage: www.tla.essex.sch.uk).

Access to IT facilities at home

We are aware that some of our students have either limited or no access to the internet at home. We are preparing a series of support documents that help students to access homework and/or remote learning for different scenarios. These include full access to the internet on a computer, access via a mobile device and no internet access. We are trying to get a clear understanding about what access students do have. We are investigating a range of support packages to ensure students can be supported as well as possible with this, whilst also ensuring the Coronavirus safety restrictions are met. Please contact Mr Pulford in school (michael.pulford@tla.school or 01206 547911) if you have any concerns about this issue.

We have been very pleased with how well this term has started, despite the challenges that have arisen by the new arrangements. We continue to review our arrangements and make developments as necessary. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us. (enquiries@tla.school).

Yours sincerely

Mr S Essex