



MEONCROSS
SCHOOL

Back to school

Our plans for the September return



MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD



Dear Parents,

I am incredibly grateful to the entire school community for their support, trust, kindness and understanding over the past few months and I am sure that like us, you are all looking forward to returning to some semblance of normality for the new academic year.

Whilst challenges still remain, there is a growing realisation among the Government and the general public, that physical school is essential to children's mental and physical wellbeing and thus at Meoncross we are determined that school will be fully open to pupils for the start of the new academic year.

Nevertheless, our overriding aim is to ensure as best we can, that when the pupils do come back, we can keep everyone as safe as possible – children and adults.

Therefore, in developing our plans for reopening the school we have carefully adhered to Government advice, whilst also ensuring that anything we do is sensible, manageable and sustainable.

However, it is important to point out that our plans are based on current advice and any additional guidance may lead to adjustments to our plan. We will however keep everyone fully updated over the summer break regarding any changes that may need to be made.

Given that preparing for the return of pupils to school will need our full focus we have taken the precaution of adding an additional staff Inset day prior to the start of term and we will now welcome the children back for the first day of school on **Thursday, 3rd September** (previously this was due to be Wednesday 2nd).

My thanks again to everyone in the school community for the fantastic support and positivity during this extraordinary period. I truly hope that all of you have a wonderful and stress-free summer break.

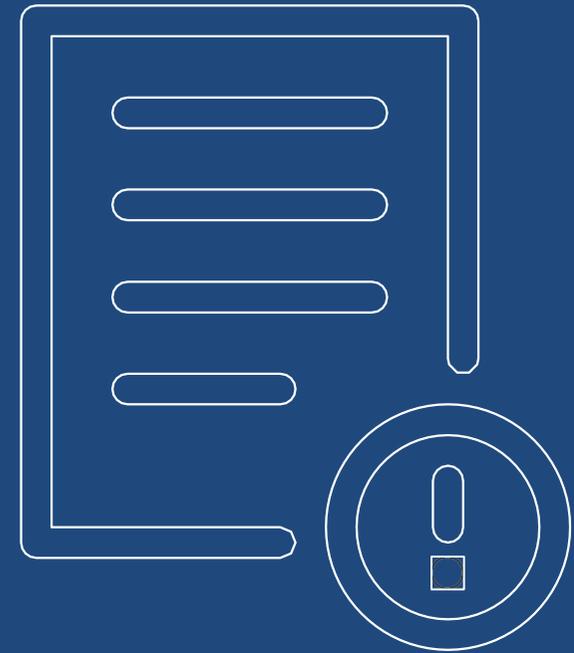
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Cripps'. The signature is fluid and cursive, written on a white background.

Mark Cripps,
Headmaster



HIGHLIGHTS FOR NEXT YEAR

1. Back to normal - this means open and running a normal day for all year groups, within the government guidelines.
2. Catch up support - for any students who feel that they would benefit from revisiting any subject learning post lockdown.
3. Wellbeing - a focus on both students and staff to help them emotionally process the lockdown experience.
4. Safety – risk mitigation to include enhanced cleaning and hygiene measures with new procedures for confirmed cases and outbreaks
5. Growth mindset - taking the lockdown experience and continuing to innovate and grow from what we have learnt.



HOW WILL IT WORK?

We have done a large amount of scenario planning and we're confident we can get back to normal.

The latest government guidelines have significantly reduced the need for social distancing and as a result schools will be encouraged to return to a full timetable for all year groups.

This is great news and to the right is a summary of what we know now. This is, of course, conditional on the continued downward trend of the infection rate.



GUIDANCE SUMMARY

Based on the government guidance released on 2 July this is what we are basing our planning on:

- Primary - the bubble concept will be increased from a maximum of 15 to 30. This means our classes can return as full year groups, and we may even have the flexibility to create larger bubbles for a whole key stage for example.
- Senior/Primary (with specialist teachers) - the bubbles will be increased to incorporate 'whole year' bubbles. This will enable us to deliver lessons as per normal with full classes. Specialist teachers will be able to move between classes provided they maintain social distancing.
- Some of the features from this term may need to remain such as staggered timings and one-way systems, as will a focus on hygiene and cleaning. More detail will follow before the start of next term.
- School services such as catering and transport can return to relative normality with some adaptations to mitigate viral spread.
- Track and trace in schools will be a focus.

NEW INITIATIVES FOR NEXT YEAR

During the lockdown period we also took action to develop a number of other initiatives which have enabled us to lead the way in online learning and teaching and we intend to build on this next year.



- **Masterclasses** - our teachers have benefited from working with global experts on how to build curriculums that offer a **blended educational experience** and how we can approach **assessment** of student's progress in new ways
- **Partnerships** - with innovative learning platforms that use artificial intelligence to create adaptive and personalised learning paths for students – more 'books' on our shared 'virtual bookshelf'
- **Wellbeing monitoring** – we introduced/will introduce **AS (Affective Social) Tracking**, an adolescent mental health tracking tool that enables schools to identify pupils' hidden risks early. This equips teachers with targeted action plans to reduce pupil mental health and wellbeing risks and is part of our global commitment to putting mental health and wellbeing at the centre of a well-balanced education.
- **Inspiring Futures programme** - developed for our Year 11 and 13 cohorts to help them get prepared for the future. The programme focused on non-academic character development such as leadership, communication, teamwork, creativity and emotional intelligence. We will continue to develop this working with some expert partners to stretch and challenge all those involved in the programme.
- **Collecting the best content from our global family** - as a Group we are developing an online platform which will host bespoke content curated from our expert educationalists from across our 80 schools. It's early days for this exciting project so more to follow soon.

FAQS



WILL THERE STILL BE A FEE FREEZE FOR NEXT YEAR?

Yes. Given the exceptional circumstances, the economic situation and the value we place on our relationship with our parent cohort the usual annual percentage increase for this coming year will not be applied.

ARE SPORTS, CLUBS & TRIPS RETURNING?

Yes, where possible. We are keen to return to 'business as usual' as much as possible, and this component of education is important.

Certain non-contact sports are approved, and clubs can generally re-start, although there are some restrictions in the latest guidance that we will work through over the summer.

Domestic trips are permitted, but not residential. Overseas trips are not yet permitted. We will keep a sharp eye on Government advice on these topics as guidance changes frequently.

WILL SCHOOL TRANSPORT RESUME?

Yes. We are following Government advice closely on this and working with our transport suppliers. Risk mitigations we are investigating are the suitability of face coverings (like on public transport), cleaning regimes, and route reviews.

WILL CATERING RETURN TO NORMAL?

We may need to operate staggered mealtimes, and apply some other operational safeguards, we intend to return to catering with a limited menu to allow us to work within the guidelines.

WHAT ABOUT LOCAL LOCKDOWNS?

We are planning in detail what happens if the school needs to temporarily close in the case of an outbreak or localised lockdown. If the call comes we can respond quickly, following a pre-agreed plan.

WHAT ABOUT INFECTION CONTROL?

We will continue our robust cleaning regime next year and work closely with our cleaning staff to ensure every possible risk mitigation is taken.

We are also reviewing our infection control procedures over the Summer to allow us to track confirmed or suspected cases and communicate with parents in the smoothest way possible.

CREATIVE KIDZ

Creative Kidz are also planning to have the wrap around care offer of before and after school.

HOMEWORK CLUB

Further information to follow.

RETURN TO SCHOOL SURVEY RESULTS

100% of parents agreed that their child benefitted returning to school

100% of parents agreed that their family benefitted from the return to school

98% of parents agreed that the return to school process was well managed by the school

96% of parents agreed every possible risk mitigation that could have been taken was taken by the school

THANK YOU FOR THE POSITIVE FEEDBACK

- *I honestly can't praise the school enough for all of the work that has gone into the reopening. My daughter is so happy to be back and everything has been so well organised. Our safety concerns are properly addressed.*
- *I have been very impressed by the return to school and think the teachers have done a wonderful job with the children.*
- *I am really impressed with how well the school has planned and carried out the return to school of year 6 and despite being nervous at first I was very quickly completely comfortable with sending my son. It has done him good being back in the classroom. Thank you.*

