



# Walderslade Girls' School

*Specialist College for the Arts*

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14 September 2020

Dear Parents, Guardians, Carers

Thank you so much to so many parents who replied to the recent survey. Your replies have on the one hand given senior management confidence regarding the staggered opening times and communication with parents, but on the other, have revealed that there is some concern over 30 minute lessons, the wearing of masks and social distancing.

As the timetable has needed to be re-written to accommodate the staggered starts, breaks, lunches and departures it was literally impossible to avoid different timings of lessons. At the outset though, it was hoped that shorter or longer lessons might be beneficial to different subjects and we will be keeping this under constant review.

As you know from the letter last week, the wearing of masks by girls in communal areas is discussed by staff every week. Although there is some crossover between year groups – 'bubbles' – during the week, it is relatively minimal and we don't feel that to enforce masks at this moment is necessary, but watch this space!

Social distancing within year groups or bubbles was never intended by the Government. We are though doing everything we can to ensure that the crossover between year groups is minimal, as we have explained.

There has inevitably been some concern over girls getting poorly with COVID symptoms. A fever is easy to detect as is loss of taste or smell but the cough symptom is causing much angst. If it is at all helpful, the guidance is very clear that the 'COVID cough' is a dry and persistent cough and is accompanied with a barking noise. A wet cough on the other hand is accompanied with the need to cough up phlegm. A wet cough is not one of the symptoms.

Many schools in Medway and across the country are now suffering with shortages of staff because of the serious lack of COVID tests available. Today there were several members of staff who were absent because either they or their children were unable to obtain a test despite constantly trying to get one. They therefore have no option but to isolate at home in order to protect the school community. Starting tomorrow, it will be possible provided that they are well enough to do so, for absent teachers to teach their lessons from home to the girls who will be situated in their classroom. Your patience would be appreciated though as we acclimatise to this enforced change.

Finally, I know that many parents send letters and emails via the school office. The staff and I try hard to respond straightaway and really appreciate your feedback as we strive to make sure that the school goes from strength to strength.

I hope you have a good week enjoying the increased temperatures.

Mr Reese

