



1st September 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

Start of Term – Welcome Back!

I hope that students have enjoyed a great summer break and are looking forward to beginning a new academic year. I am delighted that we will begin welcoming students back to the Collegiate this week after what will have been several months away from school for the vast majority. In this letter, I shall not repeat all of the details that I gave in my [Return to School](#) letter dated 13th July 2020 – please refer to my previous letter for reminders about how we shall operate differently in order to maintain a safe learning environment. For ease of reference, however, I have summarised below the timings for the first few days of term and the new staggered timings which will operate from 8th September.

Date	Time	Year Groups
Wednesday 2 nd September 2020	All Day	Staff Only
Thursday 3 rd September 2020	8.30am – 3.00pm 9.30am – 2.30pm	Year 7 Induction Day* College VI (Year 12) Induction
Friday 4 th September 2020 (time with Tutors and College Teams)	8.30am – 11.30am 9.00am – 12.00pm 9.30am – 12.30pm 9.30am – 12.00pm	Year 8 students return Year 9 students return Year 10 students return College VI (Year 12) Induction
Monday 7 th September 2020 (normal lessons begin)	8.20am – 2.15pm 10.15am – 2.30pm 11.25am – 3.40pm 9.25am – 3.40pm	Year 7 Years 8 & 9 Years 10 & 12 Years 11 & 13
From Tuesday 8 th September 2020	8.20am – 2.30pm 9.30am – 3.40pm	Years 7-9 Years 10-13

*On Year 7 Induction Day, students should arrive in full school uniform and bring a packed lunch and their usual equipment (pen, pencil, ruler etc.). PE kit is not required on the first day, but students may like to bring a pair of trainers for one of the activities on the day. They should wear black school shoes at all other times.

In order to manage the arrival of a large number of students each day and maintain the “bubbles” on site, students should plan to arrive no earlier than 30 minutes before their designated start time.

It is the expectation that all students will attend school on time and every day, arriving in their designated “arrival window” and entering via their designated entrance, unless there is a very good reason not to attend (usually, this means significant illness; in the current circumstances, this may mean Coronavirus symptoms or self-isolation – please refer to [Mr Smith’s recent letter](#) for further details). We are proud that the vast majority of students at the Collegiate maintain good attendance above 95% demonstrating their commitment to and enjoyment of the learning experiences they have with us. If your child is unable to attend, please let us know as soon as possible by telephone or email to attendance@riddlesdown.org. If your child is absent or late without notification, we will contact you as soon as possible to let you know.

The staggered arrival times should support journeys to and from school and lead to less traffic on the roads and fewer students trying to board the same buses. In spite of this, students are encouraged to walk or cycle to school, wherever possible. If parents are dropping off or picking up by car, please do so at some distance

from the school gates and ask your child to walk the remainder of the journey. At all times, please be considerate to our neighbours and avoid blocking driveways or causing unnecessary congestion.

GCSE, A Level & BTEC Results 2020

This year, in unusual circumstances, we have not published information on overall GCSE, A Level or BTEC results because to celebrate a set of grades which were, in the vast majority of cases, the Centre Assessment Grades that we provided would appear odd. However, we have celebrated the successes of individual students and we are very proud of their achievements. I would like to congratulate all students again and thank staff and parents for their contributions towards this success. In particular, I am delighted that amongst our highest achieving Year 13 students, we have had two successful Oxbridge candidates and that the fantastic results that Year 11 have achieved have enabled a record number to enrol in College VI where they can look forward to two further years of continued success.

New Staff & Promotions

We welcome the following new members of staff to the Collegiate this year.

• Miss A S Lewis	Teacher of Science / 7ASL	Aquila College
• Miss C Tully	Teacher of Modern Foreign Languages / 7CT	Aquila College
• Ms M T Condon	Assistant Director of English / 7MTC	Orion College
• Miss N S D'Sylva	Teacher of Science / 7NSD	Pegasus College
• Miss S J Adams	Teacher of English / 7SJA	Pegasus College
• Miss A M Lester	Learning Support Assistant	Pegasus College
• Mr S T Mushtaq	Teacher of Mathematics / 7STM	Phoenix College
• Mr A A Walters	Teacher of English / 7AAW	Phoenix College
• Miss H J McRoberts	Learning Support Assistant	Phoenix College
• Miss E M Reid	Teacher of DT / 7EMR	CPA College
• Mr L B Hill	Student Supervision Assistant	CPA College
• Miss S C Stewart	Behaviour Support Officer	
• Mr D Skinner	Librarian	
• Mrs T D Gascoigne	Administrator	
• Miss H R Stoker	Administrator	
• Mr C A Wright	Facilities Assistant	

We also congratulate the following colleagues who have been appointed to promoted posts:

- Miss P J Bigden has been promoted to the post of Head of Teaching & Learning
- Mr J S Weeks has been promoted to the post of Deputy Head of College VI
- Mr A McHale has been promoted to the post of Curriculum Leader, Classics

Communication & Visiting the Site

Full details of all staff in each of the Colleges can be found on our website, www.riddlesdown.org. Parents can access details of their child's reports and attendance through the [Parent Portal](#). Meanwhile, the Student Planner remains our most basic tool for communication and parents are asked to check and sign this every week. Parents may also wish to follow us on Twitter @RiddlesdownC.

Over the last few months, everyone has been making more effective use of technology to communicate with others and we must continue to do this. Whilst we are welcoming all staff and students back to the Collegiate, we must avoid allowing more people on site than necessary. **Therefore, parents and other visitors will not be able to access the site** without an appointment and, as far as possible, all communication should be on the telephone, by email or Microsoft Teams, where necessary. We appreciate your understanding and support.

Improvements to our Facilities

Since students were last at school, there have been a number of improvements to our site and facilities. Notably, the College VI refurbishment has been completed: new carpet, seating and lights in the classrooms, now accessed through an indoor walkway from the entirely new Common Room and refurbished toilets.

These brilliant facilities now match the excellent quality of our Sixth Form provision and I am sure that students will enjoy using these spaces. The toilets in Aquila College have also been refurbished, enabling the creation of an additional Year 7 Excellence classroom. At each of the entrances, wash basins have been installed and temporary partitioning has been used to keep “bubbles” separate. I would like to thank the Facilities team for their efforts to ensure that staff and students will return to a fantastic learning environment next week.

Face Masks

My original letter on 13th July 2020 explained that face masks in schools were not being recommended by the government and, therefore, they would not be used at the Collegiate from the start of term. Since then, there have been changes to some rules on the use face masks in public areas, but there continues to be no requirement or recommendation to wear a face mask at the Collegiate as we are not in an area of high transmission and we are adopting a range of other strategies (e.g. “bubbles”, staggered timings, enhanced cleaning etc.) as part of the system of controls (please refer to [Mr Smith's recent letter](#)). However, if a student wishes to wear a mask in communal areas outside of the classroom, he/she is welcome to do so, being careful to wear and store the mask responsibly. Please remember that face masks are compulsory on public transport.

Making a Flying Start!

On the first day of term, Tutors will take the opportunity to review [The Riddlesdown Commitment](#) with all students. It is important that we recognise that our students' success and the success of the Collegiate stem from the very high expectations we hold of ourselves and of each other. In particular, I remain grateful for parents' support with the following issues:

[Uniform](#) – Details are on our website and in the Student Planner. Whilst the vast majority of students have the correct uniform and wear it smartly whilst at the Collegiate, it is important that all students do the same on their journeys to and from the Collegiate also. The appearance and conduct of our students send strong messages to the local community and so students should be mindful of their reputation and always seek to enhance this. In particular, trainers and hoodies are not allowed. The current circumstances mean that we may not be in a position to lend any items of uniform but we do have some second-hand blazers (and some other items too) for sale – email admin@riddlesdown.org to make an enquiry. Please also note our rules on jewellery and visible body/facial piercings – one single pair of small studs worn in the lower ear is allowed and nothing else. In addition, the [College VI Dress Code](#) applies to all students in College VI who must also wear their ID card once it has been issued.

Mobile Phones & Valuables – We understand that parents may wish their son/daughter to bring a mobile phone to school so that they can be easily contacted after school hours. However, our rule is that when students are on site, mobile phones must be switched off and remain out of sight throughout the school day. Any mobile phones seen or heard will be confiscated for 5 school days, after which time students can collect from Student Services after school. No other valuable items should be brought to the Collegiate and any items that students do bring remain their responsibility. The Collegiate does not take responsibility for any such items that are lost or damaged. Should a parent wish to get an urgent message to their child during the school day, please telephone the Collegiate and we will pass the message on. Similarly, if students are needing to contact parents urgently during the day, they should ask at Student Services where they will be assisted.

“Riddlesdown Ready” – This is the phrase we use to mean that students are ready for lessons and ready to learn – they have the correct equipment (pen, pencil, ruler, rubber, calculator, protractor, pair of compasses, colouring pencils, glue stick all carried in a pencil case), the necessary books (including Student Planner) and a positive attitude towards learning.

Catering – Please refer to [Mrs Williams' letter](#) for details of how to pre-order refreshments from w/c 7th September 2020.

Parents' support with all of these matters is greatly appreciated. It is a maintained focus on these every day standards that allows our students to engage fully with their learning and make the best academic progress.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact us should you have any questions, concerns or suggestions - we value the strength of our Home-School Partnership and thank you for your support in helping your son/daughter to follow The Riddlesdown Commitment and work to fulfil their potential.

And finally...

I know that the vast majority of students will be very excited to return to school – and so they should be. It might take a little while to get used to how things are different. It might take a little while for students to get used to a “regular” school day of six face-to-face lessons and the expectations that come with that, but we know that returning to school is in their best interests and we know that they will soon adapt and begin to enjoy their learning experiences again. I also know that some students will have anxieties which we may need to work hard to address – we are ready to do this and so if you have a particular concern, please do let your child’s Tutor know so that we can be prepared to support in the most appropriate way.

Over the coming weeks and months, we shall continue to see change and uncertainty. Despite this, we are determined to continue to provide an exceptional education for all and support our students to be happy, healthy and successful in the year ahead. I am looking forward to it and, as always, am grateful for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sounick Dey', written in a cursive style.

Mr S Dey
Principal