



Biddenham

International School & Sports College

Principal: Mr David Bailey

Head of School: Ms Eleanor Grylls

9th October 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

Re: Autumn update

As we head into the darker mornings and shorter days, we just wanted to take the opportunity to give some guidance on health and safety in relation to travel to school and the school site. We've had a really positive start to the term, with students looking extremely smart in their blazers and full school uniform and approaching school with a positive attitude to learning. We have already seen improvements in attendance and punctuality and we thank you for your support with this. However, it's important to keep standards at a high level, so below are a few reminders.

New gates

From Monday 14th October our new gates will be fully functional and we will be utilising the automatic timer for opening and closing times. This means the following:

Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday - gates will close in the morning at 7.55am

Tuesday - gates will close in the morning at 8.45am

All days - gates will open at the end of the school day at 2.30pm

Please continue to ensure that students arrive in plenty of time before the gates close. Remember that all students have the offer of a free breakfast in the morning, so it's worth getting in on time for that! What this also means is that the site will be fully secure throughout the school day.

Communication and contacting the school

The new gate system means that consequently, visitors, parents and carers should only come into school for pre-arranged appointments. The first point of contact for most queries or concerns is the tutor.

If you ever need to bring in anything that children have forgotten please call reception on 01234 342521 beforehand to ensure you will be permitted to enter the school and we know you are coming.

Any queries or concerns requiring immediate attention, please call the school office to alert us and we will deal with and get back to you in a timely fashion or, if you need to talk to someone, make an appointment to come in. Please be aware that anyone turning up without an appointment will not be admitted, as we do not wish to cause offence.

In all communication with the school please ensure you follow the principles highlighted in the [home school agreement](#).

We are committed to working with you and your children in a positive, respectful and constructive manner at all times. We are also committed to ensuring our students and staff are working together in a safe and harmonious environment.

Travel to and from school

We encourage as many students as possible to either walk or cycle to school as the healthiest and environmentally friendly options. If your children cycle to school please ensure that they are equipped with cycle helmets, bright (high viz) clothing and lights on their bicycles. It is important that students use the cycle paths where possible and cycle safely on the roads if not. They must always be mindful and respectful of pedestrians.

If driving to school, please be mindful of the speed limits on Biddenham Turn and take extra care if you need to come down the school drive. The best idea is to drop children before getting to the school gates as this

Biddenham Turn, Biddenham, Bedford, MK40 4AZ

Tel: 01234 342521

Fax: 01234 334530

Email: enquiries@biddenham.beds.sch.uk

Website: biddenham.beds.sch.uk

will reduce traffic and make the school safer for students. Please continue to use the pick-up and drop off points on the left hand side of the drive as you exit the site and do not drop children on the turning circle or at the new gates as this is proving dangerous. Remember to drive round the turning circle, not cutting across the traffic and be respectful of the zebra crossings.

Attendance

As always, communicating that your child will be absent from school is done by contacting our Attendance officers on 01234 334528. Please also see the letter regarding attendance, '[New Beginnings, Endless Opportunities](#)'.

The new Education Secretary, Bridgit Phillipson wrote to us earlier covering a number of points, but had this to say about the importance of being in school every day:

'We all must recognise the shared responsibilities of schools, government and families. Places of learning should be centres of communities. That's why face-to-face attendance is so important. High levels of absence harm the children who come to school as well as those who stay at home. It disrupts the rhythm of the classroom and makes building a sense of belonging so much harder.' We agree wholeheartedly, so please prioritise your son/daughter coming into school.

Finally, it has already been a busy, productive and fun half term with our new Year 7s and 12s settling in well, events such as the Year 9 options evening and our Year 6 into 7 open evening and a wide range of extra-curricular activities on offer with so many students participating. We are in the middle of celebrating black history month and we have our school production of the 'Singing in the Rain' to look forward to in December - it would be wonderful to see as many of you as possible in the audience.

We are, as ever, extremely grateful for all the support we receive from our school community and are incredibly proud of our students and staff.

Yours faithfully,



Mr D Bailey
Principal



Ms E Grylls
Head of School