



21<sup>st</sup> July 2023

Dear Parents and Carers

I am writing to you to share my final letter of the academic year. I think that the first thing to say is that this academic year has presented lots of challenges to the school and the leadership of the organisation, but there remain numerous light moments that have reminded me and my colleagues of the reasons why we continue to work in education.

I mentioned in this week's celebration assemblies that I had hoped that last year would have been the final time that, as a school leader, I would have had to make any form of reference to the pandemic. However, it is quite evident that schools across the country are still experiencing the residual effects of the periods of lockdown and the subsequent return to school in year group bubbles. We have seen this in terms of negative mental health and well-being experienced by increasing numbers of children and adults, the inability of some young people to be able to regulate their behaviour, the lack of preparedness of some children to effectively function in a school setting and the subsequent impact on school attendance. These are all issues that are rarely featured in the media but are being experienced by children, schools and families across the country.

I am also conscious that the seven days of industrial action have added further disruption to the education of children across the country. However, I am hopeful that the recent pay offer from the Government, which will be fully funded, will be accepted by the four education unions, which would result in further industrial action being avoided in the coming academic year.

Whilst there have been numerous challenges this year, the highlights have been plentiful and many of these were shared with students, parents and carers during the celebration assemblies that took place this week. I would like to again congratulate all prize winners and their families on their wonderful achievements this year and also congratulate students in each of the year groups for the way that they showed their support for their friends and classmates as they received their awards.

Finally, in this section, I would like to again pay tribute to our colleague, Neill Cahill who passed away in February after a short illness. He continues to be missed by family, friends, colleagues and students and will continue to remain in our thoughts.

**Vyners School**  
Warren Road, Ickenham,  
Middlesex, UB10 8AB  
Tel **01895 234342**

office@vynersschool.org.uk  
[www.vynersschool.org.uk](http://www.vynersschool.org.uk)

**Mr Gary Mullings BA (Hons)**  
Headteacher



**Vanguard Learning Trust**  
Registered in England and Wales Number 07796938

## **Return to School in September**

As has previously been the case, we will be starting the academic year in September with a staggered start. On Monday 4<sup>th</sup> September, there will be a staff development day. The start of the academic year for each year group will be as follows:

### **Year 7**

The new Year 7 cohort will start the term on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> September at 8.25am. The school day will finish for students in Year 7 at 2.00pm on both Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> September **and** Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> September. Normal finish times will apply thereafter (see below)

### **Year 12**

Students moving into Year 12 will start the term on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> September and should register in the hall at 1.00pm. Any Year 12 students who are new to the school will be invited to attend at 12.00pm for a tour of the school. All students will receive their timetables and the school day will finish at 3.00pm. Normal finish times will apply thereafter (see below).

### **Years 8, 9, 10, 11 and 13**

Students in years 8, 9, 10, 11 and 13 will start the new term on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> September. Students in these year groups should arrive on site via the bottom gate from 1.45pm and no later than 1.55pm. Students will spend the afternoon in their tutorials completing all necessary administrative tasks so that they are ready for a normal school day, which will commence at 8.25am on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> September.

Parents may be aware that our outgoing Year 11 was the final six form entry cohort of 180 students and that, in September, we will have completed the full five year phase of our expansion. This will mean that there will be circa 1500 children on site, in addition to 150 adults on a daily basis. Whilst this will provide some challenges, we have planned to ensure that there are smooth transitions from lesson to lesson and that congestion in different parts of the school is minimised.

A link to the term dates for 2023-24, including the plan for the start of term can be found [\[here\]](#). I would ask all parents and carers to study this document carefully to ensure that their child arrives at school on the appropriate day and time. There are slightly different arrangements for some of the year groups.

### **The School Day**

The start of the school day in September will be in its normal structure with all students arriving by 8.25am and in tutorial by 8.30am. Students can use either entry gate from Warren Road. The back gate will not be in general use. In response to feedback we have taken the decision to continue to stagger the departure time for students as follows:

Year 7, 8 & 9:                   **2.55pm**  
Year 10, 11, 12 & 13:       **3.00pm**

We hope that this will help alleviate the issues related to the large numbers of students leaving the school site at the same time.

The structure of the school day will be as follows:

8.25am	Arrival (latest)
8.30am	Tutorial
8.50am	Period 1
Lesson change over	
9.55am	Period 2
10.55am	Break 1
11.20am	Period 3
Lesson change over	
12.25pm	Period 4
1.25pm	Break 2
2.00pm	Period 5
2.55pm	Years 7, 8 & 9 dismissed
3.00pm	Years 10, 11 12 & 13 dismissed

### **Punctuality and Attendance**

Attendance and punctuality rates in secondary schools in England remain significantly below those that were recorded pre-pandemic. There are a number of factors contributing to this. However, evidence from a recent [Children's Commissioner report](#) suggests that children who miss one of the first few days of the new term for unauthorised reasons are much more likely to miss long periods of their school than peers who attended the first few days. Given this evidence, I would ask that every family do their utmost to ensure that their child attends during those early periods and contact the school for support where necessary. We will have a team on hand to contact families where necessary.

All students are expected to be on site by 8.25am at the latest but **no earlier** than 7.45am unless they have been specifically invited by a member of staff for an intervention or meeting. Morning tutorials and assemblies will start at 8.30am.

**Unfortunately, we have been disappointed with the number of families who have chosen to take family holidays during term time this year. This should not happen in an Outstanding school. Permission for leave of absence for holidays during term time will not be granted** and we trust that going forward, all families will respect this and not take their son/daughter out of school for this reason. I would ask that families use the term dates shared above to plan holidays outside of term time.

There is a formal process for requesting leave of absence for any reason. Letters must be addressed to me as the Headteacher, at least two weeks prior to the date of the absence for formal approval.

## **Uniform and Appearance**

We have spent a lot of energy improving school uniform standards over the past ten years; students have embraced the improvements and I am very proud of their appearance. Visitors to the school always comment on how smart our students are.

Students are expected to wear the uniform correctly which includes top buttons being done up, ties worn correctly with the crest below the knot, shirts tucked in and skirts of the correct length. They must reach the top of their knees – if this is not the case, a new skirt will need to be purchased for September.

Please ensure shoes meet the high expectations of the Vyners' uniform policy. Kicker boots, Vans or Kicker leather trainers or similar styles are not acceptable. Please also ensure that your child starts the academic year with an appropriate haircut. As a reminder, the minimum length haircut for students in Years 7-11 is a **grade 2**.

During the summer term, it was evident that a number of students were wearing items that no longer fitted them appropriately, particularly shirts, blouses, trousers and skirts. This is quite normal towards the end of the year. However, I would politely ask parents and carers to ensure that all necessary items are replaced including skirts that fit the waist but are no longer of an appropriate length.

A link to the uniform page on our website can be found [[here](#)]. This page includes our Uniform Policy with a full uniform list. I would be grateful if you could spend time checking the uniform list carefully to ensure your son/daughter arrives properly dressed. The page also includes details of our uniform suppliers. Beat School Uniforms will be operating a pop up shop at the school on three Wednesdays in August. Full details are on the school website. With an eye on current economic pressures, can I also remind you that a special Facebook page operates to provide a useful forum for the sale or donation of second hand uniform. The page can be accessed via this link [[here](#)].

## **Equipment**

It is essential that students have the correct equipment with them every day. The sharing of equipment will continue to be prohibited. The summer holiday is an ideal time to replace those broken rulers, protractors, rubbers, pens or pencils. Please note that frequent equipment checks will be made throughout the academic year and I will be writing to parents when it is clear that their child is coming to school unprepared for learning.

### **Essential Equipment List:**

- 2 x blue/black pens (we recommend black as this colour is now exclusively used in examinations)
- 1 x green pen (ReAct work/self and peer assessment)
- Sharpened pencil
- Eraser
- Ruler
- Suitable pencil case (clear pencil cases are required for external examinations)
- Calculator and maths set
- Glue sticks
- Safe scissors
- Reusable water bottle

## Support for Families

I think that it is important to recognise that this can be a very challenging time of year for some families on low incomes when schools publish lists of items that need to be acquired. If there are families who do require support to acquire either items of uniform or equipment then I would ask that they contact Mrs Tighe, Family Liaison Officer, who will try to arrange for assistance where possible: [ktighe@vynersschool.org.uk](mailto:ktighe@vynersschool.org.uk)

## Staffing

This summer we have a number of staff who are at a point in their careers where they have been fortunate to gain promotion to posts in other schools and some who are either relocating to other parts of the UK and abroad or have chosen to retire. There are some staff who have chosen to take a break from teaching and one member of staff who will be starting teacher training. We say a very fond farewell to them and wish them every success in the future:

Mr Alhadeff	History and Ethics
Mrs Brennan	English
Miss Brown	English
Mrs Cannas	Music
Mrs Dale	SEN Learning Support Assistant
Mr Freeman	English
Miss Forde	Science
Mrs Frisina-Hook	English
Mr Hamid	Economics
Miss Harvey	Art Technician
Mr Hey	Geography
Mr Kunig	English
Miss Maxwell	Art and Photography
Ms Monconduit	Computing
Mrs Rozar	Cover Supervisor
Miss Ward	Mathematics
Miss Woodbury	Mathematics

Parents may be aware that recruitment in the education (and many other) sectors is currently very challenging. Having spoken to many colleagues in other schools in different parts of the country, it is clear that there many schools who have not been able to fully staff this year, and amongst those that have, there has often been a reliance on non-specialist or unqualified staff. Given this, or any other context, I am pleased to be able to share with parents that we are fully staffed with excellent specialist teachers across all areas of the curriculum and we will continue to develop our strategy to ensure that we secure excellent teaching and non-teaching staff going forward. I would like to say a very warm welcome to the following staff that will join us at the start of term:

Mr Abraham	Music and Ethics
Miss Amin	Mathematics
Mrs Bartlett	SEN Learning Support Assistant
Mr Brown	SEN Learning Support Assistant
Miss DeSouza	Year 12 Leader, Science
Ms Evans	Drama and Performing Arts
Mrs Gardner	Languages

Mrs Jackson-Smith	Subject Leader, Geography
Miss Kaur	Computing and Maths
Mrs Robinson-White	Subject Leader, Economics
Mrs Olungabi	Assistant Headteacher, Media
Mr Singh	Computing and Maths
Miss Simmons	English
Mrs Veronese	English
Miss Vuolo	SEN Learning Support
Mr White	English
Mr Wilcox	Photography

Finally, I would like to congratulate all our students on their endeavours this year. There have been so many achievements that they and their families should be proud of. I would also like to thank the staff for their efforts and the support that they have given students, and would also thank all parents and carers for their continued support. My final thanks go to the members of the Local Governing Body and Trustees of the Vanguard Learning Trust for their commitment to the school and wider trust throughout this year. Their support has been invaluable.

Wishing our entire community a very enjoyable summer holiday and I look forward to seeing everyone in September.

Yours sincerely,



**Gary Mullings**  
**Headteacher**