
The Swan School September 2020 Reopening - FAQs (19/8/2020)

The New Building

How confident are you that the building will be ready by the 14th September - is there likely to be a further delay?

- We are very confident that the building will be ready for the 14th and don't anticipate any further delays. The inside of the building is ready and looking great. We will be putting up pictures on our website later this week so that you can all see progress - we are really excited to move in! Our developers have brought in extra resources to finish the external areas so there should not be any issues getting these finished.

What exactly is the issue with the external areas?

- There have been delays to the tarmacking and landscaping of the external areas, which have not been helped by recent inclement weather. This means that there is no safe access onto the site (without having to go through a construction site), many of the hard-standing areas that we are relying on for play space are not yet ready, and cycle storage has not been able to be installed.

Is there no alternative access to the site?

- Unfortunately, there is no alternative access. The only access to the school is via the main entrance on Marston Ferry Road.

Why is it not possible to use the old temporary building for a short period of time?

- The temporary building is not large enough for all of our students - we have doubled in size this year! Trying to accommodate all of our students at the old site would have meant we would have to have a split day or part-time education.
- All of the furniture and equipment, including IT, has already been moved out and is needed for the new building. It would take time and be expensive to move everything back and set it up again at the temporary building; not to mention that there would be another delay on the 'other end' when the equipment would have to be moved and set-up again.
- We would need to do matriculation activities again when we move into the new building as our routines will be different there, so using the temporary site even for a week would not actually mean that students are able to start curriculum lessons earlier.

Pre-Learning and Essential Provision

What form will pre-learning take? How long will the activities take up?

- We plan to send home a pre-learning pack of activities. There will be one activity per subject, for example reading a book or doing some research about a particular topic. We do not expect these to take the whole day; the tasks will be quite open ended so that children can spend as much or as little time on them as needed.

Will pre-learning be the same as distance learning during lockdown?

- No, pre-learning will be more light touch for a number of reasons but partly because we are not able to lend out chromebooks for this period so cannot guarantee that students have IT access. We will not be expecting work to be submitted.

What will children do if they are part of 'essential provision'?

- Teachers will supervise the provision on a rota and plan an activity that interests them for this time. Activities will be varied but we expect the feel to be more like a 'holiday camp' rather than specific classroom teaching.

Will all children be able to join the 'essential provision'?

- Unfortunately spaces are extremely limited as we will be borrowing classrooms from another school so we cannot offer provision for all children. Please make sure you fill in [the form](#) if you would like to request essential provision for your child - we will look at all requests and be in touch to confirm by Tuesday 1st September at the latest.

Year 7 Mini-Matriculation *specific information will be sent to year 7 parents/carers

Does my child have to attend year 7 Mini-Matriculation?

- Attendance is compulsory for year 7 cygnets. Please communicate with us in advance if there are any issues so that we can support your child to attend. If your child is ill on the day and unable to attend, please follow our normal absence procedures by calling the school office on 01865 416070.

Can my child attend a different mini-matriculation to the one they have been invited to?

- Students should only attend the mini-matriculation day they have been invited to. A large part of the day will be getting to know their form tutors and classmates so attending a different day will be of limited value.

What time will mini-matriculation be?

- Students should arrive at **9am for a 9.15am start**. They will be dismissed at **3.15pm**.

Where will it be held?

- Mini-matriculation will be held at Cherwell School, South Site. Students should be dropped off and collected from the **rugby clubhouse** next to The Swan's old temporary building (this is where you will have attended any open events or enrolment interviews - please see our website for a map.)

Can I drop my child off?

- Due to Covid-19 restrictions, parents/carers will not be able to gather in groups for drop-off and collection; this is to help us maintain social distancing. Please arrive as close to the time as possible and be prepared to leave promptly. We understand that the first day of secondary school is a big day for parents as well as children - we will be taking photos on the day and will send them round so you don't miss out!

Do I have to drop off/collect my child?

- Students do not need to be dropped off/collected by parents - it is very common for secondary school students to travel by themselves. Please make sure your child lets us know if they are making their own way home.

What should my child wear?

- Students should wear their **school uniform and bring their pencil case** with them. We also recommend that students bring with them their own hand sanitiser.

Will children be doing family dining?

- unfortunately we will not have catering facilities available at Cherwell. Students will need to bring a **packed lunch and their own water bottle**. Please ensure that your child's lunch does not include nuts. Family dining will start on the 14th September.

I thought year 7s would not be in tutor groups until halfway through matriculation week - has this changed?

- We had originally planned to make decisions about tutor groups during matriculation week, however this has changed in order to help us make the most of our shortened matriculation. Children will be able to get to know their tutor group from their very first day. We have allocated students to tutor groups based on gender, prior attainment, primary schools, and student preferences. These may be subject to some changes as we get to know the children better.

Matriculation Week/Curriculum Lessons

Why can't students get straight back into normal lessons on the 14th?

- Matriculation is a vital part of our school year as it helps us to lay the strong foundations which ensure our students are able to be successful in their studies. This is particularly important this year as our school doubles in size, we move into a new building, and given the length of time many children have been out of school. It may seem like a quick-win to cancel matriculation and get children straight into their 'normal' lessons, but we know that they will not learn as effectively if we do not induct them properly into Swan life.

What will the students miss out on by having shortened matriculation?

- We are trying to ensure that students miss out on as little as possible by making the best use of mini-matriculation for year 7 and rescheduling some activities for later on in the week (for example using Supervised Study). We have removed some of the activities that were already going to be very challenging in light of Covid restrictions, for example the year 7&8 sports afternoon, singing performance, and the house ceremony. We hope that we can hold these celebrations later in the year when guidance changes.