

30 June 2020

Dear Parent/ Carer

### Coronavirus Update No 10

I hope you are keeping safe and well whilst enjoying some of the hot weather we have had lately.

I write to update you as we head towards the end of the summer term.

Thank you to all those parents/carers who completed the survey for Years 7-10. This enabled us to effectively plan for the return of students as per the Government guidance. Year 10 have begun their phased return to school and we have not just offered face to face reviews but we have kept them in class (socially distanced) and taught them, hopefully recapping and cementing knowledge and skills they have covered over the lockdown period. The students have been excellent whilst back in school and coped really well with all the health and safety procedures. It is strange for them and for us – not like normal teaching!!

As I write we have now finalised the plans for Year 7-9 to come in school for a face to face review. Letters will go out this week with interview times and locations. There were many comments on the open section of the survey and I will try to answer them all in this letter. The following may help;

- Parents are still not allowed on site so cannot attend with students. We must restrict the numbers of adults on site so only Academy staff in limited numbers can be on site at any one time
- The year groups will be seen on individual days with their tutor (or a replacement if staff are shielding)
- The Heads of Year will be present to help and support students if they feel anxious or worried
- School uniform will not be required for the meeting
- The meeting will last for only about 20 minutes, we will 'check in' with students, have a friendly chat, see how they are, if they have coped, if they have completed work and offer reassurance for a safe return in September
- Your child can discuss any work related issues with their tutor and we will follow up any concerns
- Your child does not need to wear a mask but PPE kit will be available as they enter the building if they wish to have it
- All students entering the building will have to socially distance and sanitise their hands (on entry and exit)

I have had many questions about a return in September. At the moment the news suggests that the Government are committed to all students returning to school in September. What we do not know is what this will look like. We have not yet received any guidance. It is promised this week. At the moment we are operating in 'bubbles' of keyworker students/vulnerable/ SEND in one bubble. Year 10 students in their own 'bubble' in a different zone of the school. They do not mix. We are also operating the 2 metre social distancing regulations and will continue to do so until the end of the summer term.

We are not setting school work over the summer break other than revision for Year 10. When we do return we will share with parents detailed plans of 'catch up/stepping up' to ensure students don't fall behind with work.

Year 9 students moving into Year 10 have selected options and proceed with their choices as per normal when we return. Year 8 who would have chosen them will not do this. They will have a specifically designed 'Recovery Curriculum' to ensure they are ready for choices at the end of Year 9.

At the moment we will not be carrying out any large parent's evenings or general meetings on site as this is simply not allowed.

During our recent contact with students and our monitoring of Class Charts we have had parents/carers commenting that home schooling is becoming increasingly harder and it is much more difficult to motivate and engage students as lockdown continues. As a result we have sent a letter to you all and adjusted our monitoring so parents get a direct email from the class teacher if work is not complete. Our trial with this strategy over the last week has appeared to work and parents feel more informed and empowered to challenge the non-completion of work. We appreciate your feedback and support with this.

We are introducing contactless payments for when students return to school. This will be provided using an app called My Ed. We will contact you nearer to September with more information on how to use the app and log in.

**Uniform will be required in September**, please visit the Academy website for further details and how to order online. All students will need a plain black bag large enough to carry A4 folders, pencil case etc. we will no longer be 'loaning' pens, pencils, calculators as CV19 restrictions mean we cannot share equipment. Please purchase some cheap equipment over the summer break ready for your child's return to school in September.

I hope this covers all of the questions raised on the surveys. If you wish to contact us use the enquiries email on the website. We will endeavour to answer within 24 hours.

Our returning students tell us they are struggling getting back into normal routines, going to bed at a reasonable hour, getting up in the morning, sorting themselves out with equipment and clothes. Perhaps these are skills we as parents can try to re-instil in the ready for a school return in September. I will leave that one with you! Routine, routine, routine – it's the best way. In school 'social distancing' and 'personal space' issues have always been part of our rules. Help us to help them by chatting how it works.

I will write to you all again with the detailed plans for September before the end of term.

Keep safe and stay in touch. We miss our students and are really looking forward to having everyone back into the Academy as soon as possible.

Warm regards



Mrs J S Bridges OBE  
Principal

