

22 July 2020

Dear parent/carer

### **Re-opening arrangements: September 2020**

Thank you for your patience as we develop our plans for reopening. It has certainly been a challenging start to my tenure as Principal, but I have been hugely impressed with the approach and attitude of our students as they have engaged with remote or blended learning. Staff at the Academy are looking forward to consolidating that learning and this letter details our plans for fully re-opening in September.

On 2 July 2020 the government provided guidance on the full re-opening of schools from September.

The full guidance for schools can be found at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

The guidance for parents at this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-in-the-autumn-term>

This guidance is, of course, subject to change.

We have continued to follow our safe, steady, gradual approach and have put robust processes and routines in place to meet all requirements of the government guidance. The safety of students and staff remains our number one priority and as a result we will:

- minimise students' contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does, do not attend the Academy.
- ensure students and staff wash or sanitise their hands thoroughly and more often than usual whilst at the Academy.
- ensure good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach.
- introduce enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces often, using standard products such as detergents and bleach.

Our plans, outlined in this letter, along with detailed risk assessments minimise the risk of transmission of COVID-19 whilst ensuring our students continue to receive a broad and balanced curriculum.

The overarching principle we have applied is that of minimising the number of contacts between students and staff and minimising contact between students in different year groups. This will be achieved through keeping students in separate year group 'zones' thus creating distinct 'mini schools' within the Academy.

Students in each year group mini school can mix but they may not have contact with students in any other year group whilst on the Academy site. This is the case for lessons, communal time and as students arrive and leave the Academy site.

The site will be clearly marked out, to ensure that students understand which areas they can access. Each mini school will have its own facilities including: an allocated entrance and exit, a suite of classrooms, a bespoke stairwell, a COVID-19 isolation room, their own toilets, an intervention room and a clearly identified outside space and lining up area. Students will be escorted to practical areas for lessons in Technology, Music, Drama, PE, Art and for the use of IT equipment.

The details are in the table below. Please discuss this with your child/children with a focus on identifying the Entry/Exit Gate and the zones which they may use. New Year 7 students should report to the front of the Academy where staff will be on hand to direct them to the appropriate areas.

Year	Zone	Room	Line-Up (inside gates)	Entry/Exit Gate	Break/Lunch zone(wet or dry weather)	Lunch time slot	Stairs	Toilets	Covid Room
11	Science	S1 S2 S3 S4 S8(intervention) S9 T11 T26	Line-up back of Q2	Large Science gate	Science & Music areas	11.50 - 12.20 (front hatch)	Science	Science	Science downstairs prep room
7	Humanities	Q36 Q37 Q38 Q39A Q39B	Outside PE	Front of Academy by the astro	PE, grass near astro	12.20 - 12.50 (back hatch)	Humanities to PE	Humanities	Humanities office
10	Maths	T15/T16 Q21 Q22 Q23 Q24 Q25 (intervention) Q26A T27	Yr10/11 existing lines, student services side	Science side gate by Data/Exams office	Main quad, SEN side (divide down centre)	12.20 - 12.50 (front hatch)	Maths	Male toilet in Maths, Female downstairs staff toilets outside student services	Q26B
8	English/Humanities	Q31 Q32B Q33 Q34 Q35	Quad, canteen side	Front of academy side gate by bins	Quad, canteen side	12.50 - 13.20 (front hatch)	Success Centre	Drama	Geography corner office
9	English	Q27 Q28 Q29 Q30 Q32A	Before the tunnel	Back gate	Back of academy	12.50 to 13.20 (back hatch)	Library (staff stairs)	Concert Hall	MB office
12/13	Post 16 Centre	A1 A2 A3 A5 S7 S10 T6 T10	Post 16 Centre	Post 16 Centre	Post 16 Centre	11.50 - 12.20 (back hatch)	Post 16 Centre	Post 16 Centre	Careers Room
	Specialist teaching rooms			Drama Q18/Q14B		Music T5/T7		Art T6/T24/T25	
				Pe Pe block/outdoors		Technology T10/T12/T14/T18/T20/C1/C2			

## Phased reopening and the Academy day

Please note that the Academy will have a phased re-opening with Year 7 and Year 11 starting back on Wednesday 2 September 2020 at 8.40am and all other year groups returning on Thursday 3 September 2020 at 8.40am. Year 12 enrolment will take place on Wednesday 2 September 2020.

There will be no change to the length of the Academy day. Students should be lined up in their designated zones by 8.40am and they will be dismissed from their zones at 3.00pm.

To support Year 11 in preparation for their examinations we will be instigating a compulsory Period 7 intervention session for all students, from 3.10pm until 4.00pm every day except Monday. This will begin on Tuesday 8 September 2020. I will write to you with further details of this later in the week.

### **Travel to and from the Academy**

When travelling to and from the Academy students should follow the government guidance, 'Coronavirus (COVID-19): safer travel guidance for passengers.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers>.

This guidance emphasises that students should only use public transport where it is necessary. If public transport is used then staff and students should observe social distancing, minimise surface contact, and wear a face covering in line with guidance. Parents/carers and staff are responsible for providing face coverings.

The government guidance states that students on dedicated school services do not mix with the general public on those journeys and tend to be consistent. This means that the advice for passengers on public transport to adopt a social distance of two metres from people outside their household or support bubble, or a 'one metre plus' approach where this is not possible, will not apply from the autumn term on dedicated transport. Students using dedicated school services should:

- use hand sanitiser upon boarding and/or disembarking
- maintain social distancing when queuing and boarding where possible
- maintain social distancing within vehicles wherever possible
- use of face coverings, where appropriate, for example, if they are likely to come into very close contact with people outside of their group or who they do not normally meet

Facilities will be in place at each entrance to the Academy for the disposal of face coverings if required. Reusable face coverings must be stored inside a plastic bag whilst on the Academy site

Where possible we encourage students to travel to and from the Academy on foot or by bicycle – again observing social distancing. During lockdown we have installed new covered bike storage areas in front of the Academy.

### **Catering provision**

Before the Academy Day

Unfortunately, our Breakfast Club will be suspended until we have greater flexibility to offer this service. As a result, we ask that students do not arrive at the Academy until after 8.15am. We will continually review catering arrangements throughout the term to ensure we are doing all that we can to support our students and families during this return to a 'new normal'.

Break

All students will have break at the same time but will be restricted to their year group zones. Mobile food distribution sites will be available in each zone provided by our canteen staff. A range of cold snack options, including sandwiches, will be available.

- Year 7 will have access to the canteen via the rear entrance.
- Year 8 will have access to the canteen from the front entrance.
- Year 9, Year 10, Year 11 and Sixth Form will have access to the same cold options for break time, but this will be delivered from a mobile station taken directly into their “zone”.
- Any canteen facilities will be cleaned, following COVID-19 cleaning procedures, to ensure the highest standards of hygiene and cleanliness.

## Lunch

Year groups will have a staggered 30-minute lunch break between 11.50am and 1.20pm.

Necessary adaptations to the canteen are being made to ensure that barriers and Perspex guards are in place.

Year Group	Lunch Time
Year 7	12.20pm-12.50pm (Back hatch)
Year 8	12.50pm-1.20pm (Front hatch)
Year 9	12.50pm-1.20pm (Back hatch)
Year 10	12.20pm-12.50pm (Front hatch)
Year 11	11.50am-12.20pm (Back hatch)
Sixth Form	11.50am- 12.20pm (Front hatch)

To facilitate this, the canteen will be divided into two separate areas, and students will be able to access a combination of hot and cold food and drinks during their lunchtime. During a lunch sitting each year group will be served from different serving areas; back hatch or the front hatch. Students will enter and exit using an identified one-way system for the assigned area of the canteen that is being used.

- All food is “grab and go” and students are expected to take this outside.
- In the instance of inclement weather, students will have access to their classrooms and duty staff will be allocated to these areas. Students may also use walkways or other covered parts of the school within their “zone”.

We operate a ‘cashless’ system at the Academy and therefore no cash payments are accepted on site. All students purchasing from the Academy menu will need to ensure that funds are credited via SchoolMoney in a timely manner. Students eligible for free school meals will not need to add credit to their accounts. Any students wishing to bring in a packed lunch will still be able to do so.

## Attendance and Punctuality

Now that the infection rate has decreased, the government has been clear that they expect all students to attend school from September. As a result, we will follow our normal attendance procedures when we return.

The exceptions to this will be:

- students self-isolating because they show symptoms of the virus or they live with someone with these symptoms.
- students who are under the care of a specialist health professional who advises them to shield. Please note the governments shielding guidance changes from 1 August 2020. Parents/carers should discuss their child’s care with their health professional before returning to the Academy. Written evidence must be provided to the Academy Attendance Team.

If any parents/carers are feeling apprehensive about their child returning to the Academy, they should contact us so that we can discuss your concerns. Finally, your child will of course have access to our excellent Pastoral Team when they return. We are aware that the lockdown has been a difficult time for many of us, including our students. Please let us know if you think your children might need extra support when returning to the Academy, such as if they feel anxious about coming back or they have experienced a bereavement.

### **Standards and Expectations**

I make no excuses for our exceedingly high standards and expectations. I will write to you later this week to clarify information related to our new Behaviour Policy, and remind you of our uniform and presentation expectations from September.

We hope this letter has reassured you that we have carefully planned the full re-opening of the site in September, with both the safety and quality of education of your child as integral aspects of these plans. Whilst there are several measures in place, it's important to note that apart from reduced movement around the Academy, students should have a relatively unchanged experience in terms of the depth and breadth of the curriculum they will receive. Our students will receive the education they rightly deserve. We look forward to welcoming your child back in September. Until then, please stay safe and well together and enjoy your summer.

Kind regards



Mr Ged Rae  
**Principal**

