

15 September 2021

Dear parent/carers

Re: Return following the summer break

It has been fantastic to welcome students back to the Academy following the summer break. The Academy has been vibrant, and students have demonstrated our values of integrity, ambition, and excellence. Students have looked incredible in their uniform and new tie. Thank you for your support in ensuring we maintain exemplary standards of presentation.

The launch of our Curriculum 2021 programme has been exceedingly successful, and students have had the opportunity to try a variety of new activities which will support the development of character traits which will better prepare them to be future change makers in society. It has been amazing to see students engaging with a myriad of subjects in the Extend and Enrich programmes, including British Sign Language, Japanese, debating, gardening, DIY, drama, chess, environmental studies and sport, to name but a few. Further, the Prepare programme has focussed on reading and developing skills in how to learn, study and remember.

Our commitment to improving the learning environment has continued over the summer. Significant work has been completed to refurbish classrooms, enhance site security, and improve IT systems. Unfortunately, some of this work has overrun. As a result of this, we have had some problems with IT and telephone communications during the first week. Please accept my apologies for this. We have worked with our partners to resolve issues and service should now be back to normal.

Communication

To improve your ability to communicate with the Academy we are making some changes to make contact more efficient. Please note, our social media channels are used to share information and celebrate the life of the Academy - they are not regularly monitored. Please always contact the Academy via telephone or email as we cannot guarantee a timely response by social media.

- For general enquiries, please contact our Administration Team via telephone, at the number above, or via email using the new email address DUK-office@attrust.org.uk
- You should continue to report absence using our Absence Line or by text. Details can be found on our website <https://www.dukeries.attrust.org.uk/absence-reporting/> You should contact the Academy every day during a period of absence.
- Your first point of contact at the Academy is your child's Coach. The Coach meets with your child, every day, and will be able to work with you to resolve day-to-day enquiries, pastoral and learning requirements. They can be contacted using their email address. All email addresses now follow the same pattern following our IT upgrade *firstname.surname@attrust.org.uk*
- More complex pastoral support, attendance and safeguarding needs will be met your child's Pastoral Leader. Again, they can be contacted via email:
 - Year 11: Mrs Marshall selena.marshall@attrust.org.uk
 - Year 10: Mrs Hughes taryn.hughes@attrust.org.uk
 - Year 9: Mrs Prince fiona.prince@attrust.org.uk

- Year 8: Mrs Price zoe.price@attrust.org.uk
- Year 7: Mrs Whitton (Mrs Whitton starts with us on 20 September. Until then please contact Mrs Hughes)
- To discuss any aspects of your child's learning and academic progress please contact your child's Standards and Progress Leader:
 - Year 10 and 11: Miss Maycock lindsey.maycock@attrust.org.uk
 - Year 8 and 9: Mr Wright david.wright@attrust.org.uk
 - Year 7: Mr Mellors craig.mellors@attrust.org.uk
- As ever, I and the senior team are available if a concern cannot be resolved by one of our expert staff.

We will always endeavour to respond quickly to your contact and certainly within 2 working days.

COVID 19

We are now operating under new government guidance for COVID 19. Following the return, we offered all students two, on-site, Lateral Flow Tests. We will be distributing home testing kits, this week, and ask that you test your child twice weekly. If your child tests positive you should book a PCR test. The latest government guidance allows students to attend the Academy, as long as they are asymptomatic, even if they are a close contact or awaiting the results of a PCR test. If your child has COVID symptoms they should self-isolate until the result of a PCR or they feel better.

We are continuing to use protective measures to ensure the safety of our Academy community. These measures include keeping rooms well ventilated, additional cleaning during the Academy Day, and encouraging good hand and respiratory hygiene. We also have plans in place to manage any outbreaks, should they occur.

Catering

As is typical at the start of a new year, our catering service is a little slower than usual. During the first week and for the rest of this week, we will extend lunch for students to ensure everyone is served and has time to eat. We are working with our catering partners, Chartwells, to provide additional service points and are awaiting the delivery of new equipment to support this.

Free School Meals

Please ensure that you check to see if you are eligible for Free School Meals on the government website <https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals>. Not only does it give you access to additional support, but it also provides additional funding for the Academy to enhance learning and progress. If you are eligible you can apply on the Nottinghamshire County Council portal https://emsonline.nottsc.gov.uk/CitizenPortal_LIVE/en.

Travel to and from the Academy

We have enhanced our safeguarding arrangements by installing additional fencing and gates to the front of the Academy. We have monitored the drop off point, in the front car park, and feel that we need to improve safety by reducing vehicular movement. Therefore, from Monday 20 September, we ask that you drop off and pick up students at the back of the Academy, accessed via Main Road (B6387). Thank you in advance for your understanding.

We have also installed bike shelters, at the front of the Academy, and would encourage students to cycle to school instead of using a car. This change is better for the environment and will support students' physical and mental health.

Class Charts App

We utilise the Class Charts software and mobile app to record attendance, punctuality, recognition of success and sanctions for negative behaviour. We also use this app to inform you of same day detentions. Using the app, parents/carers and students can monitor students' contribution to Academy life in real time. You can find out more about the app at <https://www.classcharts.com/>. We distributed access codes to Year 7 last week and will send reminders to Year 8-Year 13 parents and carers over the next week. I urge you to sign up and check the app regularly.

Refurbishment Work

We have now refurbished 10 new classrooms in the main block and will have completed the work on all 18 rooms by October half term. In addition, our new reception will be completed by the end of this week. I am committed to ensuring our students and staff have the best learning environment to support them to excel. Further to this, work has started to replace our boilers to ensure there is not repeat of the heating issues we experienced last winter. Finally, I will update you on the next phase of our refurbishment work once plans have been finalised, I am grateful to the ATT Operations Team, John Harris and Associate and Prince Build for their work on the project to date.

Please keep up-to-date with everything that is happening at the Academy by following us on social media and by regularly checking our website. You can follow us on Twitter @DukeriesAcademy and on Facebook @dukeriesacademy.

Kind regards



Ged Rae

Principal