August 2020

Dear Families

We hope you have all had a good summer break and are looking forward to coming back to the Academy. I know the staff are looking forward to seeing old students and meeting our new starters.

As you come back you will see a lot of changes, some caused by our building programme which is moving ahead of schedule. Some of which is due to the many changes we have made to keep students safe due to Covid-19.

**The Academy resumes for all students on Thursday 3rd September.**

At the end of last year, I wrote to you about many of the changes we are putting in place to keep students safe. I would emphasise that all medical evidence is pointing to the risk to children from the virus being very low. You can find that letter on our website and we have created a section of our website dedicated to all the changes we are making here:

<https://wbca.school/parents-and-carers/covid-19-arrangements/>

However, I wanted to go through a few key points before we return, to address some recent changes around face coverings by the Government and talk about arrival to the Academy. We will go through all of the advice and changes with students in the first two days back. On these days students will be with their form tutors for all lessons.

**Arriving at the Academy**

Students have offset arrival times to ensure no mixing of year groups and there is no breakfast club available at the moment. The arrival time is the earliest time the students should arrive by, ready for their registration at 8:45 or 9:00am.

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| **Year 7** |  |  | **Year 8** |  |
| Arrival | 08:30 |  | Arrival | 08:50 |
| Registration | 08:45 |  | Registration | 09:00 |
| Dismissal | 15:10 |  | Dismissal | 15:25 |

Students should come to the playground where they will be met by their tutors and taken to their classes. We would ask you please not to gather round the gates, even though it is the first day of secondary school. There will be plenty of staff on hand to make sure the students are well cared for.

**Key Changes**

The Academy has undertaken a full risk assessment.

* Students are required to sanitise their hands on arrival to the Academy, before and after break and lunch. We have 30 dispensers around the Academy to accommodate this.
* Students are organised into year group ‘bubbles’ to reduce the number of students that they see and interact with. They will have their lunches and breaks in these bubbles.
* Students should wear their PE uniform on the days they have PE and may also wear their blazer on top of this. There is no PE in the first two days.
* Students and staff should wherever possible maintain social distance from each other.
* Enhanced cleaning will be undertaken throughout the day.
* Assemblies and other large gatherings will be virtual.
* Should parents need to attend the Academy for any reason, please make an appointment as our meeting spaces are very limited. The majority of contact will be by phone.

**Lunches**

Lunches will be pre-packaged with disposable cutlery. Students are still able to bring a packed lunch if they wish. We will be using cards instead of fingerprints which will be issued to the students. Free school meal funds will be added to the students’ account each day which they can use with their card.

**Face Coverings**

The government have recently changed their advice on wearing face coverings in schools, following advice from the World Health Organisation. The current advice is that wearing face coverings in schools is only required in areas where a local lockdown is being enforced.

It must be noted that wearing face coverings **does not** **reduce** the requirement to socially distance from others and we will still expect staff and students to follow all the appropriate guidance on social distancing.

* All visitors to our Academies must wear a face covering at **all times**.
* Pupils **may** wear appropriate face coverings in corridors, dining room, toilets and playground.

Students will not be permitted to wear face coverings in classrooms as it is not appropriate to wear a face covering for hours and hours each day. We are putting this advice out as a **may** but there is no requirement, nor is it recommended for your child to have or wear a face covering other than on public transport. The majority of the time students are moving as a single class and it is very difficult for students to not touch their face coverings. Therefore:

* Students must remove face coverings before entering classrooms.
* Students must remove face coverings if requested to do so by any member of staff.
* Where students wish to wear a face covering, parents must show students how to put face coverings on and remove face coverings safely.
* Students must have appropriate storage for their face coverings when they are not being worn.
* Face coverings must be removed from the face when not being worn and not tucked under the chin.
* Students must wear face coverings on all public transport to and from the Academy.

**Covid Symptoms**

If your child is showing any Covid symptoms, including a new continuous cough, a high temperature or a loss of taste or smell you must not send them in to the Academy but isolate at home and seek a test.

If any child shows any of these symptoms at the Academy they will be isolated within the Academy and sent home immediately. We would ask that you inform the Academy of any test results so that we are able to engage with Public Health England and NHS Test and Trace. Should the Academy be advised to close due to local lockdown or by Public Health England we would return to online teaching.

I know this is an unusual start to a term, yet with this virus likely to be with us for some time we would ask that you trust us to have done everything possible to ensure your children are safe according to the guidance. It is very important your child attends on the first days so they understand all of the things we have put in place and how to act in the Academy.

We look forward to seeing you all in just under a week.

Kind regards

George Faux

**Principal**