

Re. Ensuring Your Child's Safe and Successful Return to Schooling

25.9.20

Dear Parent/Carer,

I hope this letter finds you and your family well, in these difficult times. I'm writing to update you on some of the measures the Academy is taking to make sure your child's return to full time education is safe, happy and allows them to flourish academically.

Firstly, I would like to commend your child for the mature and sensible approach shown as they returned to the Academy after the prolonged lockdown. I have been very impressed how all students have worked with us to ensure that our whole community continues to stay safe. Thank you for your support in this.

Keeping Your Child Safe During Coronavirus

I sent you a letter before the start of term which outlined the precautions we are taking to keep everyone safe, including the 'zoning' of our Academy. You can read the details in the letter again here: <https://www.wixamsacademy.co.uk/assets/Uploads/Yr810-Dear-Parents-and-Carers-September-Reopening-14.7.2020.pdf>

We have further updated our guidance this week to ask all students and staff to wear facemasks in corridors and social areas of the Academy, starting on the 28th of September.

Our full 'Academy Risk Assessment' can be viewed on the website here:

<https://www.wixamsacademy.co.uk/assets/Uploads/WA-September-Opening-Risk-Assessment-for-website-17.9.20.pdf>

Helping Your Child Catch Up Academically

The lockdown will have affected students in a variety of ways and it is likely that the academic progress of most students will have been adversely affected to some degree. We have actually been pleasantly surprised just how 'ready to learn' students have been since their return.

However, we have a whole raft of strategies in the Academy to bring students back 'up to speed' with their schoolwork:

A. Each subject leader has adjusted lesson content to ensure that missed work is being recapped and that key concepts and principles are being regularly reinforced and embedded.

B. We are carrying out 'light touch' tests and quizzes in all subject areas, to help us identify gaps in knowledge, so we can adapt our teaching programs accordingly, but without causing undue anxiety.

C. Assistant Principal, Mrs Hepburn, has written to many parents and carers about the additional 'booster' classes we are running during and at the end of the school day. Around 30% of our students are currently engaged in these extra classes and we will continue to offer these opportunities to many more students throughout the year.

Supporting Your Child's Well-Being

The Academy is blessed with a very strong Pastoral team who support each student every day. In addition, we have implemented the following strategies:

- A. Tutor, Assembly and 'Personal, Social, Health Education' (PSHE) programs have been redesigned to deliver content to help students cope with stress and anxieties caused by the pandemic
- B. Form Tutors are carrying out individual conversations with their tutees to ensure they have all the support they need to deal with the pressures of returning to school
- C. Our dedicated Heads of Year and our two excellent Therapeutic Counsellors, Don Grassi and Nicky Dyer, are meeting with many students to assess their well-being and to offer support where required. As parents and carers, you would of course be kept informed about any contact with our counsellors in advance.

Contingency Planning For Possible Future Closures Or Absences

The Academy has a comprehensive strategy to cope with any future closures or absences caused by Coronavirus.

- If students are absent (but healthy) for more than two days, they will have work provided by the Head of Year and will have the opportunity to join some lessons via live video.
- If teachers are absent (but healthy), they will still teach their classes via live video. We have successfully trialled this already this term.
- In the event of an Academy or 'large group' lockdown situation, students will follow their full timetables, with work and lessons being set and taught live.

I trust this letter demonstrates how effectively we are supporting your child academically and emotionally and how well we have prepared for any potential lockdown situations in the future.

You will have the opportunity to ('virtually') meet your child's tutor at 'Progress Review Day' on 10 December, but in the meantime please don't hesitate to contact their tutor, Head of Year or me directly with any questions, concerns or suggestions.

Finally, I would be very grateful if you would share your views with us by completing a short survey by clicking on this link: <https://forms.gle/AYE4Q3nqsEE3kW7a7>

Yours sincerely,



Paul Spyropoulos

Principal