



July 2020

Dear Parents, Carers and Guardians

Following my letter that was sent to parents last week I am pleased to report we have now got the go ahead to open fully to all students in September. Governors and Trustees have had the chance to review our plans and they are happy that we have plans in place to provide the safest possible school environment for the new school year.

In the Milton Keynes area the number of positive cases of Coronavirus is now very low and many of the lockdown measures have now been lifted. This gives us confidence that it is safe to open up the school for all students. The risk is not completely eliminated and never can be, but we are confident that with the arrangements that we have put in place will be effective in keeping students and staff safe. There is also the risk of students missing their education to consider too and we hope that you will see that in our plans we have struck the right balance between protective measures and keeping the learning experience as normal as possible.

The Government guidance for schools makes it clear that there are a number of protective measures that should be in place as schools reopen. These measures are explained in more detail in our risk assessment which will be published on our website but can be summarised as follows:

- Students, parents and staff should not enter the Academy if they feel unwell with Covid-19 symptoms. Please make sure students do not leave for school if they are displaying any COVID 19 symptoms. Students should wash their hands before leaving home and must only bring to the school the equipment and resources needed. We encourage students to bring their own hand sanitiser into school each day.
- Parents/Carers must ensure that students who live in a household with COVID 19 symptoms do not attend school until appropriate periods of self-isolation have taken place. COVID 19 symptoms currently include:
 - A new continuous cough
 - A high temperature
 - A loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)
- It is important that we reduce the number of visitors to the Academy that have not been arranged in advance. Please email or phone to make an appointment if you wish to discuss an issue.
- Personal hygiene habits of very regular hand washing/sanitising, catching a cough, using tissues etc. are the most essential and effective methods of preventing transmission of the virus.
- Keeping the environment clean by using common household cleaning products on furniture, toilets, door handles and other commonly touched items.
- Keeping social distance wherever possible.

In order to make these measures work we have made a number of adjustments to how we organise the Academy and introduced some new rules to keep everyone safe. The following information is a general summary of our approach. You will receive a year group specific letter before the end of term that details the exact details that your child needs to know. Students will be sent a short video to explain how arrangements will work and what their responsibilities are. The video will be sent to the students directly and it will only work if students access it through their school email account.



Year groups

In order to reduce the chances of virus transmission we are keeping students in year groups as much as possible. This will mean that they enter the building in different locations and congregate in their year groups before lesson 1. Students are always taught in their year groups so in lesson time things won't feel very different. Break and lunch will take place at staggered times with two year groups having their break or lunch at the same time but in different locations. The year group will have access to canteen facilities and toilets. This system will reduce the times in the day when all the students move at once during lesson change. There will be some times when the whole school does move and we have put in place some new rules to help make this work safely.

Lessons

As far as possible lessons will take place as normal but there will be some new routines to follow. All students must have washed or sanitised their hands before they enter the classroom. Hand sanitiser will be available in every classroom. The arrangement of the desks will be in rows to reduce the number of times that a student is face to face with another student - this is important in reducing the transmission of droplets that may contain the virus. Classrooms will be at normal capacity and if there is spare desk space the teacher will spread the students apart as much as possible. At the end of the lesson students will help to clean down their table and chair, using household cleaning products before they leave. There is a new set of classroom rules that are displayed in each classroom. Our plan enables all students to access all of the subjects that they would have normally had - we think this is very important. However some practical lessons such as science and drama may have to run modified activities.

Moving between lessons

Students will need to move between lessons to access specialist teaching rooms. The risk of transmission from people walking past one another in a corridor or outside is low so we have put some new rules in place to help make this possible. In all corridors the rule is to keep to the left and staircases will be one way only (except in an emergency situation). In the Maths corridor there will be a one way system. Students need to be responsible for keeping themselves safe and must follow the rules and guidance that is in place.

Tutor time

We normally run a tutor group system with students from mixed years in each. This has had to change for September. Tutor groups will be year group based but your child will still be in the same house. This will mean that your child is likely to have a new tutor. We know that this might cause some anxiety but we are confident that things will settle down quickly. Tutor time has been moved to the beginning of the day and students will be dismissed from the last lesson of the day at staggered times to reduce the number of students leaving at once. Students will be encouraged to move away from the school as quickly as possible to avoid congestion on Rickley Lane and surrounding areas.

Pick and drop off

We would like parents to support the Academy by ensuring that wherever possible students do not arrive at school before 8.30 and that they walk. If you need to drive your child to or from school it would be best to drop them off/pick them up at an agreed location a little way from the Academy.

The Canteen

The Canteen and the Cube will be open at break and lunch time for service. The range of menu options will be reduced and will be pre-packaged 'grab and go' food. The same food will be served in both locations and payment for food will be via the normal fingerprint method. There is hand sanitiser available for use in each location and hand washing facilities nearby. Students may bring their own packed lunch.

Break and social time

Students will continue to have two breaks but at different times from normal. Each break will be 30 minutes in length. Unfortunately many of our indoor social areas for use in bad weather are very small and are in areas where teaching will be going on. These spaces will not be able to be used from September.

Therefore students are going to be outdoors at break and lunch time in all weather conditions. We recommend that students have a coat with them on colder days and an umbrella for when it is wet.

Equipment and uniform

Students will need to have their own equipment as normal. We won't be able to lend out equipment. Normal Academy uniform should be worn. We expect the normal high standards of school uniform but understand that finding and buying uniform has not been easy. We would hope that parents will be able to address any uniform issues within the first few weeks of term.

PE

Our changing rooms are small and therefore we are asking that students wear their Academy PE kit on the days when they have PE. As the autumn term progresses it is likely that the weather will deteriorate so we are happy for students to supplement their PE kit with other appropriate sportswear. This might include a pair of jogging/tracksuit bottoms and a thicker sweatshirt. If such items are worn they must be plain black in colour.

Face coverings

Under current Government guidance face coverings will not be worn in the Academy. Students who travel on public transport will need to wear a face covering but these should be disposed of in the bin provided if it is a disposable type. For reusable face coverings the student should have a bag to place it in to take home to wash.

Start of term dates

As there are many new arrangements in place for September we have taken the decision to stagger the start of term a little more than usual. Our new Year 7 students have not had a chance to visit the Academy at all this year so we are keen that they have some time to settle in. It is also likely that there will be a longer Sixth Form registration process to accommodate. Year groups will return as follows.

Monday 7th September	8.45am Year 7 and Year 11
Tuesday 8th September.	8.45am Year 7, Year 8, Year 9, Year 11
Wednesday 9th September	8.45am Year 7, Year 8, Year 9, Year 10, Year 11, Year 12
Thursday 10th September	8.45am Year 7, Year 8, Year 9, Year 10, Year 11, Year 12, Year 13

I appreciate that here is a lot of information in this letter to take in but I hope it gives you a sense of what we have done to keep your child safe and learning. If you have any concerns please feel free to contact us at school. We will be picking up messages during the holiday but please understand that the reply may be a little slower. Please look out for the letter that gives specific details about the arrangements for each year group. We will publish a FAQ section on the website to respond to queries.

Yours sincerely

Jim Parker
Principal