



15 July 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

## **Re: Arrangements for the End of the Summer Term and Start of the Autumn Term 2020**

I hope this letter finds you and yours well. Our Year 10 wider opening plans have gone well and it has been a real joy to see students back in school again. Lockdown has been a testing time for us all and despite these being ever changing times, I am writing to confirm the details for the end of this term and the arrangements for the beginning of the next academic year in September, as they stand at present. My apologies that this is a lengthy letter but the reasons for this will become obvious below.

### **Final Day of the Summer Term**

Friday 17 July 2020 will be the final day of this academic year and will be the last day that online learning is set for students. As previously published on our website and in the Student Planner, the Academy day will officially finish earlier on the final day of term at 13.30 and thus no online work will be set for the afternoon.

### **'Teachers' Day'**

As many of you know, the final day of term is normally the Academy's 'Teachers Day' when teachers traditionally dress up in fancy dress to mark the end of the academic year. Due to the current lockdown, this will be far more difficult this year! On this day, however, you will know that I always encourage students to seek out the staff who they feel have particularly helped and supported them throughout the year in order to thank them. I have thus sent the postcard template we normally use to all students by email and have invited them to send it back to '[office@aan.norfolk.sch.uk](mailto:office@aan.norfolk.sch.uk)' in order that we can distribute them to the relevant teachers. Similarly, parents and carers may wish to join in with this initiative and send a message of thanks to the teacher/s who you feel have markedly helped your son or daughter this year.

### **Start of the Autumn Term Arrangements**

The main focus of this letter is to provide a summary of the plans for September's full re-opening. The lengthy summary below however, will not provide the full detail, nor answer every question and so we will send out further detailed year group specific information to you all before 21 August 2020.

I am sure you will be aware that the Government have stated their intention and published their guidance for all children to return to school full time from the start of September. In working through the guidance, we have been busy redesigning the systems and structures upon which the current workings of the school are based in order to ensure students and staff can return safely. We have, however, ensured that we keep to our current curriculum in order that we provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all students and so that we also honour the choices that students have previously made for their GCSEs and A Levels.

The Government guidance dictates to schools the 'must happen' prevention and safety requirements as:

- *minimise contacts with individuals who are unwell*
- *clean hands thoroughly more often than usual*
- *ensure good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach*
- *introduce enhanced cleaning*

The guidance also asks schools to 'properly consider' how they will:

- *'minimise contact between individuals and maintain social distancing wherever possible'*

This aspect of the guidance does provide schools with some flexibility and autonomy in their approach. Each school has had to take account of their own context particularly in terms of the needs of the curriculum within the layout of their school, the buildings and physical space.

### **Our Plan**

Government guidance requires us to make some significant changes to our structures and practice. The principles are as follows:

- An absolute reliance on good hygiene, which has recently become habitual for most of us.
- A focus on calm orderly movement. Our students are very able to self-regulate but some additional guidance and 'training' will be required.
- The use of 'zoning'. Years 7 to 11 will be zoned into separate buildings for their lessons, temporarily creating six 'micro schools within a school'. The aim being to minimise contacts with students from other year groups. This use of zoning by creating 'year group bubbles' is the recommended infection control mechanism.
- We would be guided by the authorities if we were to get a confirmed case of coronavirus. Public Health England will support the school in determining if a class, year group or multiple year group closure is required. Schools that have taken steps to minimise contacts, we are told, will be 'less affected' by the necessity for whole school closure and thus the use of year group 'bubbles' is the most prudent course of action.

Alongside these principles above are temporary changes to the way in which we will operate as a school:

- The creation of Year group 'bubbles' immediately causes us a problem for our pastoral structure with our 'Vertical' tutor groups and so we will have to, at least temporarily, reorganise our pastoral tutor groups into **tutor groups across the same year**.
- **Year groups will be assigned to a 'Zone'**, a designated building and will have separate places to purchase food and for break time and lunchtime recreation. Year groups will thus act as almost separate schools. Students will remain in their allocated zones for the full day, with the exception of any specialist rooming they require, for example use of the PE facilities.
- **KS3 will mostly be taught in their new form groups but KS4 setting will be maintained** and thus KS4 students will sometimes change classrooms between lessons within their zone. For example, a Year 10 student may have Maths with one group of students and English with another.
- Students will **enter and exit the site at designated points**. There are three gates which will be allocated to specific year groups.
- Some **one-way systems will be in operation** and new rules for movement will support calmness and safety.
- Students in **KS5 will have wider access to subject specialist teaching rooms**. Students in KS4 will have access to some subject specialist rooming and students in KS3 will have limited access to subject specialist rooming.

There can be no doubt that this new way of working, teaching and learning will take time to get used to and we must acknowledge that there are temporary compromises.

Over the years, we have developed subject specialist teaching rooms that provide high quality specialist equipment and resources in areas like Science, Technology, Art, PE, Drama and Computing. In the short term and as described above, access to these rooms will be reduced in order to meet the aim of minimising mixing between year groups.

The structures will be reviewed regularly in conjunction with regional and national advice on the rates of infection and any further changes or clarifications from the Local Authority and Government. Our aim is to return to normal as quickly as is safely possible but we recognise that this may occur in phased steps.

We have mapped out a four-phase approach which allows us to move quickly across phases e.g. up to the scenario of a second closure (Phase 4) and back to the scenario we are all hoping for, which is a return to relative normality (Phase 1).

| AA Coronavirus prevention phases | Details  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| 1                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Return to normal roomings and timings</li> <li>Good hygiene and one way systems</li> <li>Year group separation by timetable</li> <li>Consider full/partial return to vertical tutor groups</li> </ul>   |
| 2<br>(From September 2020)       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Good hygiene and one-way systems</li> <li>KS3 and KS4 placed in micro school zones (blocks)</li> <li>KS5 students moving around some of the site</li> <li>KS5, and where possible KS4, students have most access to specialist rooms</li> </ul> |
| 3                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Year group sent home</li> <li>Lessons for that year group taught from school on MS Teams</li> </ul>   |
| 4                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local lockdown,</li> <li>Remote learning for all</li> </ul>   |

### Bridging Gaps in Knowledge

The Academy recognises that students have experienced very different lockdown periods. It is clear that the majority of students have engaged fully with our online learning provision, communicated with their teachers and in many cases, gone beyond expectation. However, for a variety of reasons, there will be students with gaps in their knowledge.

You will know that we have a fantastically dedicated and committed staff body who will, over time and largely within the normal classroom routines, ensure a bridge for any gaps in knowledge caused by lockdown. For some students, however, additional bespoke support will be required.

Clearly **Year 11 and Year 13** have important exams at the end of the next academic year. Current information shows that it is highly likely that the exam season will be moved back by a month or so, which does provide additional teaching time. This additional time, alongside high-quality teaching, learning and revision will support students that have been able to commit to the necessary remote learning. We have, however, organised **a Period 6 for all Year 11 and Year 13 students** in order to support them further in bridging any gaps in their knowledge and allowing them the best chance to flourish. On Tuesdays to Fridays the school day will finish for Year 11 and Year 13 at 16:15 beginning on Tuesday 15 September 2020 (Tuesday of the second week) and our aim is to have bridged these gaps for Year 11 and Year 13 by February half term. More information on this will be sent to students and families in August.

**Within Key Stage 3**, low threat internal assessments will be utilised to determine knowledge gaps in subjects. This will once again inform curriculum delivery but also provide information on students that may require one to one or small group tuition.

Please see the attached 'provision posters' which show the extra support we will be providing in September as a response to our return from lockdown.

## **The Student Role**

We are fortunate to have students that are mature, intelligent, sensible and naturally look after all other members of the community. In September, we will be asking all students to play a major role in community safety. Students will need to follow new rules carefully, self-regulate their behaviour and work with staff to create a calm, happy and purposeful environment.

## **First day back**

The Autumn Term will begin for students on Monday 7 September 2020. As in previous years, there will be two start times with bus pick-ups for both times. Students who will be in Years 7 and 12 are expected to be at the Academy as usual from 08.30 for the start of the day at 08.40. All other year groups will be required to arrive at the Academy at the later time of 11.15 (breaktime) and go straight to Period ,3 to meet their new Form Tutor. The later bus 'pick up' times for students who will be in Year 8 to Year 11 and Year 13 will be two and a half hours later than the usual pick up time. From Thursday 10 September 2020, students in all year groups will start as usual from 08.40 in form rooms. All students in Years 7 to 11 will be expected to be in full and correct 'Winter' Academy uniform from the beginning of next term.

## **Academy Uniform**

Since transferring over to Sapiencia Education Trust, I am sure you will have noticed that the Academy does now have a new logo. We had to change logos as our previous Trust held the licence for the old logo design. We will not however, be expecting parents or carers to purchase new uniform as it has been decided that the new logo uniform can be phased in over the next five years. This means Year 7 students will wear the new logo uniform and Years 8 to 11 wear the old logo uniform. The expectations are the same for example that girls can wear trousers but if they wish to wear a skirt, it must be the Attleborough Academy skirt (with relevant logo as explained above) and must be worn at the correct length which is touching the knee. Expectations are thus the same, only the logo changes according to the relevant year group. This is to ensure we keep up with our high standards of appearance. All uniform is available from Stevensons at 67 Ber Street in Norwich or online at [www.stevensons.co.uk](http://www.stevensons.co.uk). As summer holidays are a particularly busy time for school uniform shops, it is advisable place your order early in August so that it is delivered in time for September 2020.

## **Students Being 'Prepared for Learning'**

Would parents and carers please ensure that their child is fully equipped for the Academy in September 2020 and refer to the basic stationery kit list as follows:

### **Basic Stationery Kit**

Pencil

Eraser

Pencil Sharpener

Ballpoint pen (blue or black ink)

Short ruler (15cm)

Calculator

Pair of compasses

Protractor

Dictionary (pocket size)

A reading book

Pencil case (we recommend that this is of a plastic variety in order that it can be wiped clean/sanitized)

*Long ruler (30cm) (optional)*

*Coloured pencil set (optional)*

MFL dictionary (if your child studies a Modern Foreign Language)

Whiteboard pen (not a permanent marker)

**From September 2020, it is vital that your child has their own stationery kit as they will not be allowed, nor wish to, share stationery equipment with other students for obvious viral preventative measures.**

You will note that there is an **additional item to the Basic Stationery Kit this year in the form of a whiteboard pen (not a permanent marker)** so please ensure that this is included in your child's kit. Students will be using personal whiteboards to respond to teachers questions in a lot of lessons and so to have their own whiteboard pen will be a prudent measure.

### **Bus Service**

We are currently liaising with our school Bus Service in order to ascertain their plans for students travelling to the Academy. Please note that we are asking the bus companies to mandate the wearing of masks for the safety of all of our students. We see this as a similar situation to public transport and so we will be strongly recommending that students use masks on school transport.

As of September 2020, we will be reinstating a late bus service for Year 11 and Year 13 students who will be involved in Period 6 lessons which will take place on Tuesday to Friday each week commencing from Tuesday 15 September 2020. Please note that this service will **only** be available to Year 11 and Sixth Form students.

### **Group Call Xpressions**

Almost all parental communication is delivered electronically by our app-based provision called 'Group Call Xpressions'. Most parents and carers have been using this app to also check attendance and behaviour information. Please continue to ensure that we have your correct mobile number and email address for our Academy database. This is especially important if you have changed mobile telephone numbers. Should you have any difficulties with using this app then please contact our IT Team at [ict@attleboroughacademy.org](mailto:ict@attleboroughacademy.org) Due to our recent Trust transfer, as you can see from the email above, we are transitioning our email addresses and further information will be sent out by Group Call next week.

### **Buildings Masterplan: Phase One 'Reception Building'**

Despite the completion of this building being delayed by lockdown, we are very excited at the prospect of having the new Reception Building finished and handed over to us during the holiday period. From September 2020 the Academy Reception, Student Support Team, Art classrooms and Drama Studio will relocate to the new building. This will complete Phase One of the four phases of the Buildings Masterplan.

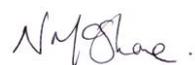
### **Academy Times**

The Summer edition of the Academy Times has been published on our website and shows details of our many achievements and successes this term even though we have been in lockdown.

As always, I would like to thank each and every one of you for your continuous support of the Academy. Lockdown has been an incredibly testing time for us all and we should feel especially proud of what we have achieved as a community. Please look out for the further detailed year group specific information to support a safe September return which will be sent to you during the holiday period.

Best wishes to you all for a happy and relaxing summer break with your family.

Kind regards



**Neil McShane**  
**Executive Principal**