

27 August 2020

Dear Families,

This letter will outline our arrangements for our students returning to the academy. We are very excited to welcome everyone back and make up for the time we have lost over the last six months. All of our preparations are focused on ensuring a safe return for all members of our community. We are working as one Trust, in line with Government guidance, to ensure that we have as many mitigations in place to ensure we put safety first for all of our students and staff. All students will be fully briefed on this on their return, and we will use our website to share more information around our COVID recovery plans. If you have any questions or concerns after reading this letter, please contact the academy by phone, or email info@dixonsua.com.

Thank you to all of you who have been so understanding, patient and supportive over the past six months. It is a very difficult time for us all professionally and personally and we will always try to work together in partnership with you all to remove barriers and anxieties and support a safe return to education for all of our students.

New Year 7 students

Firstly, I just wanted to remind you that we have set up a Transition section on our website – please go to the *Admissions* section. There are instructions below relating to our first days back in September. Please read these carefully and please do contact us if you would like more information. You can contact reception, or you can email our Year 6 Transition Leader, Mr Grayson: pgrayson@dixonsua.com.

Our new Year 7 will join us on Tuesday 1 September 2020. Year 7 should arrive from 7.45am and should move to the pedestrian entrance on Heights Walk. There will be members of our team on the main gate to direct families towards this entrance. We ask that you maintain social distancing while waiting to enter the academy site.

Unfortunately, parents will not be able to accompany their child on to the academy site and will not be permitted beyond the entrance gate.

Year 7 will then have a day of induction to ensure that they can be supported in getting to know some of the key routines and expectations. All Year 7 students will be placed in to form groups and will be welcomed by me and my team. Students will receive a pencil case with all the equipment they will need as well as a planner and Knowledge Organiser folder. We would like them to bring a reading book from home if possible please. They will also have some taster lessons, delivered by experienced teachers, to support them in understanding the routines and expectations. On this day, we will also focus on supporting them to understand the COVID arrangements and how they can attend the site safely.

Year 7 students will remain in a year group bubble and will not mix with any students outside of their year group. All other arrangements for Year 7 will then be in line with our plans for all year groups – please read this information below so that you are clear on our plans.

Year 11

Year 11 will also return on Tuesday 1 September. All students should use the entrance at the rear of the academy (Heights Lane). This gate will be open from 7.45am. They will be welcomed back in to form groups and informed about the safety measures and COVID plan to ensure they can safely resume their education. Year 11 will remain in a year group bubble at all times and will not mix with other year groups.

Arrangements for all year groups

I will now outline our plans for the safe return of all students in September. Unless the government releases any conflicting guidance, we will be expecting all students to attend the academy. For students who have serious medical conditions, or those that must continue to shield, we ask that you contact the academy to begin discussions about supporting your child's continued education.

Firstly, our school days and weeks will not change from our current plans. The academy day will start at 8.00am and finish at 3.50pm (Monday) or 2.50pm (Tuesday – Friday).



The academy will open to students from Tuesday 1 September. Year 7 and Year 11 will return on the Tuesday. All other year groups will return on Wednesday 2 September. All students will be in form groups for the start of the day and will receive Health and Safety briefings and a welcome back from me and my team.

Year 7: Tuesday 1 September at 7.45am
Year 11: Tuesday 1 September at 7.45am
Year 8: Wednesday 2 September at 7.45am
Year 9: Wednesday 2 September at 7.45am
Year 10: Wednesday 2 September at 7.45am

Arrival and dismissal

In order to manage the safe entry and dismissal of students on to our site, we are using different entrances for each year group, and each year group will have all of their lessons in separate zones in the academy:

- We will open the academy gates at 7.45am.
- Students will then be asked to enter the site, and move in single file towards their entry point in to the building. Staff will be there to support with this and ensure that students walk in single file, sensibly to their Zone. Students must follow staff instructions carefully to ensure they go to the correct zone before being allocated to their period 1 classes. On the first day only, they will be in form groups for period 1 and 2. Lessons will begin period 3.
- All year groups will remain in bubbles and will be restricted to their zones, unless they have to travel to use practical facilities, such as PE. Students will not have contact with anyone outside of their year group while in the academy building
- When we dismiss students, they will be escorted to the same entry/exit point as outlined below.

It is vital that all students follow the guidance around arriving and leaving the academy site safely. We would recommend that all students return home and do not meet up with friends from other year groups. Of course, travelling home with someone from your household is perfectly permissible.

Year Group	Entrance / Exit to be used
7	Pedestrian side gate from Heights Walk
8	Main entrance at the front of school
9	Side (MUGA) gate (Congress Mount)
10	Delivery drive from Congress Mount
11	Back gate leading to PE (Heights Lane)

Access to lockers

On the students' first day in school, they will be given controlled access to lockers to enable them to clear them of their belongings.

Face coverings

Face coverings must be worn on public transport when travelling to and from the academy. Following Government advice, our Trust has also decided that face coverings are mandatory in all communal areas of our academies:

- Students must wear face coverings in all large shared communal areas: corridors, when inside during break / lunchtime (other than when eating), on all buses to and from the academy (check your school bus provider).
- Students may choose to wear a disposable paper covering or a cloth covering (washable and re-useable).



- Where there is an individual need, we will consider permitting plastic visors for students, although these will need to be worn at all times.
- Face coverings must be plain coloured and must not be scarfs, balaclavas or bandanas; they must be suitable for a place of work.
- Some students with specific medical needs may be exempt from wearing a covering. It is expected that the student will already have some identified need and this will be discussed with the parent and the SENDCo. **If this is the case for your child, please contact the academy.**
- Where a student chooses to wear a face covering, at all times, they must ensure that they keep it in place and are not putting it on and off because of the increased risk of infection.
- Coverings must be kept in a small plastic bag and this can be kept in a pocket.
- The covering must not be left on any desk or table at any time.
- It is the responsibility of the student and their family to come to the academy with a face covering and to ensure good hygiene routines in relation to it.
- The expectations around conduct with regards to coverings are the same as all other expectations; no touching other people's coverings, no borrowing / taking from each other.
- At the moment, students will not have to wear a face covering in the classroom – this will be optional.
- All staff must wear face coverings in communal areas. Staff will have the option of wearing a face covering in the classroom while they are teaching.
- If students are wearing disposable covers, they must dispose of it in a plastic bag and in a lidded bin.
- Cloth coverings must be washed every day. Alternatively, if a student cannot manage this, they must be kept in a small plastic bag for 72 hours and rotated with clean covers.
- Paper coverings do tend to be dropped on the floor: nobody must touch anybody else's covering without wearing disposable gloves and then thoroughly washing their hands.
- Face coverings are, of course, just one further way of preventing the spread of COVID-19. Hand washing, the hygienic disposal of tissues, and social distancing are even more important as ever as we all return to school.

Lesson arrangements

The timetable will run as normal and the curriculum will be focused on recovering the lost time from the end of this academic year. All year groups will be taught in 'setted' classes within their year group zone or 'bubble'. Teaching staff will travel to their classes. There will only be one adult permitted in a classroom at any one time. Each classroom has an identified 'safe zone' marked out for the teacher, in which they can remain at least 2m from any student, allowing safe delivering their lesson. Both students and teachers may choose to wear a face covering in class.

Students must use their own equipment and must not share any equipment with anyone else. For most subjects, students will remain in this class to ensure movement between classrooms is minimised. Students will not be allowed to enter other year group bubbles and must always remain in their year group zone. For practical subjects, students will be escorted to their classroom by the teacher once all other students are safely inside their classrooms. All practical areas will be treated daily with 'safe spray' which creates a protective barrier against germs and bacteria, and lasts for 5 hours. All areas used across the whole academy will be deep-cleaned every day and sprayed with antibacterial barrier treatments.

The academy behaviour policy will continue to be in place with some slight amendments in light of COVID. Detentions will be issued to students as normal; however, we have decided that students will not serve their detentions until the week commencing 14 September. After so long out of school, we believe it is important that all students have a chance to adjust to our expectations before serving detentions. Any student receiving a detention from Monday 14 September, will have to serve this. All detentions will be served in year group bubbles. You will receive a text message to inform you of the detention, as per our pre-COVID arrangements.

Break and Lunch

Break and lunch will be split to enable cleaning of these areas between year group uses. At all times, year groups will remain separated and students will not be able to mix across year groups. There will not be food available in the canteen at break time. We will provide water; students should bring their own refillable water bottle.



Students are also allowed to bring a suitable snack from home to have at break. Each year group will have a dedicated outside space for break and lunch; there will be no mixing between year groups.

On Tuesday, all Year 7 students will be set up with accounts to be able to purchase food. We will provide a free lunch to all Year 7 students on this day. From Wednesday, students will have to pay for their lunch. They can bring money to use the 'top-up' machines – the machines accept notes or coins. The cost of a meal with dessert and drink is £2.52 p/day. **Eventually, we will ask all parents to ensure they are registered and are using Parent Pay. We will send an activation letter home with students next week.**

Lunch will be served on a rota and, unfortunately, we will not be able to serve hot food to every year group; every day. We will set up a rota for the year groups so that each year group has access to hot food at least twice a week. With COVID restrictions, our caterers can only provide a restricted service. Strict guidelines will be in place for queuing and serving of food, including the wearing of face coverings inside the building – unless eating. Each year group will have a dedicated area to eat their lunch. Food orders will be taken during Morning Meetings by the staff delivering the sessions. All surfaces and communal areas will be cleaned between sittings.

Uniform

Students **must wear full academy uniform** at all times when attending the academy. On the day that they have PE, they must wear their academy PE Kit as we are not able to have the PE changing areas available to students. *Design School Uniform* is our uniform supplier – they are based on the Headrow in Leeds City Centre, or you can purchase uniform items from their website. For any families who would like advice or support with buying our uniform, please contact the info@dixonsua.com email (Year 8-11), or email Mr Grayson (new Year 7s).

Equipment

Students must bring their pencil case, planner, reading book and Knowledge Organiser to school every day. Students will not have access to lockers so bags and coats will need to be taken to their zones / classrooms. Students must not share any equipment with each other. Students will be able to replace items in school – we will have items for sale in each zone.

Safeguarding and Child Protection

If you have a concern or issue, please contact the academy safeguarding team using: safeguardingteam@dixonsua.com, or contact me directly. We will address serious issues immediately. You can also call Social Services if you have concerns about a child on 0113 2224403 (between 9-5pm).

- If you have questions about the plans for the academy re-opening, our letters to families can be found here: <https://www.dixonsua.com/news-events/news/covidprincipalupdate>

Our Trust Risk Assessments and Recovery Planning will be live on our website from w/c 1 September.

I understand that this is a very anxious time for you all. I hope that I have been able to give you enough information for you to understand the number of measures we have in place to ensure that we operate as safely as possible. We need our young people back in schools to support them to have a brighter future, and to support you as parents with their development and wellbeing. Please do contact us if you require any support, or if you have any questions. I look forward to working together in partnership to get through this situation in the hope that, one day, we can enjoy a post-COVID world and a life free of restrictions, guidelines and risks.

Thank you for your continued support. Please let us know if we can support you in any way – we will be resuming our food parcel service soon and will continue to support our community in any way we can.

Yours sincerely



Danny Carr
Principal

