

14 September 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

**Re: Welcome and update on school routines**

Welcome back to all our students and especially our new students who have joined Year 7 – we hope they will settle quickly into the school community and feel as though they belong here. Welcome also to other students who have joined us in other year groups. I am also pleased to introduce to you the new staff who have joined the team this year.

Mrs Beales, Receptionist

Miss Burningham, Art teacher

Mr Gosney, History teacher

Mr Lawler, IT teacher

Mr Mansfield, Science teacher

Mr McBride, Curriculum Leader for Maths

Mr McCarthy, PE and Maths teacher

Miss McCauley, Science teacher

Mr McDonnell, English teacher

Ms Peryer, Drama teacher

Mrs Ratcliffe, Art teacher

Mr Taylor, Teaching and Learning Lead and Maths teacher

Mrs Tillotson, Music teacher

Miss Vais, Inclusion Assistant

Mrs Vasilkova, Science technician

In addition to these staff, we also have nine members of staff who will be following the school direct teacher training programme with us. We are very pleased to welcome them to what is already a very strong staff team and we hope they will settle quickly with us.

We are so excited to have all our students back and it is wonderful to welcome them back to school and to hear the school alive with students' laughter and learning again. We are very proud of how students returned to school last week: they were settled, calm and so positive. It will take a few days for us all to get into the new routines.

In my letter back in July, I shared with you the procedures we were putting in place in light of government guidance to have all students back in school. I also put this information on our website in the form of a Powerpoint

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presentation. Thank you to those of you who went through this and shared it with your son/daughter. All students had a year group assembly on their return to school last week and this information was shared with them again then so we are all clear about the policies and procedures in the academy.

In essence, the following bullet points list the main principles we are following:

- The school is zoned and each year group have their own area of the school
- Year groups will remain separate from other groups
- There will be staggered break and lunchtimes with year groups having a specific zone to go to
- Classrooms will be organised so desks are forward facing
- There will be rigorous hygiene routines and students will be expected to hand sanitise on entry and exit of the academy and at the start of lessons.
- We will continue to limit visitors visiting the academy and parents will not be able to enter the school without an appointment.

Thank you so much for taking the changes so well. As you can imagine, it is not until we get students back on site that we can see how our new procedures and routines are working. Last week was a successful week and I am pleased that students have settled quickly back into lessons and engaging with their learning - something that could have been a challenge following their time out of the Academy.

I do want to use this first letter to update you on some small changes we have made and to reiterate important messages so we can ensure school is well organised, safe and learning is maximised.

#### **Arriving and exiting the academy – important information regarding times**

The Academy day will start at 8.40am but students will enter and exit from different points in the academy and at different times. Students are now clear about where they enter and exit the academy:

Year 7	Doors at the student exit
Year 8	Catering gate by the Hub
Year 9	Main reception
Year 10	Gates at the end of the car park by the leisure centre
Year 11	Dance Studio doors

**We have had to tweak further the entry times to ensure all year groups are staggered so please read the information below carefully. [These new timings will start from tomorrow Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> September](#)**

#### **Year 7**

Year 7 doors will be open from 8.20am but **students must be in by 8.30am**. They will go directly to their classrooms. Students in Year 7 will be dismissed **at the end of the day at the slightly earlier time of 2.50PM**

#### **Year 8**

Year 8 enter near the canteen and it is important they do not mix with other year groups but make their way to the gate at 8.20am when it will be opened and they will be able to go into the canteen until they move to lessons at 8.35am. **Year 8 will now be dismissed at 3.05pm**

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## Year 9

Year 9 enter through main reception and need to be there ready to enter at 8.30am. They then need to follow the corridor and go straight upstairs to the Year 9 corridor/zone they are based in. **They will be dismissed at 2.55pm now.**

## Year 10

Year 10 enter via the gates towards the leisure centre at the back of the car park. **They need to be here by 8.35am and will be dismissed at the new time of 3pm.** It is important that Year 10 remain on the path rather than walking through the middle of the car park.

## Year 11

Year 11 enter through the dance studio doors and are able to wait in there until lessons start. They should be in by **8.35am and they are dismissed at 3.30pm.**

It is important that students go to their area and do not mix with other year groups in the morning. If they are late and the entry point for their year group has been closed, students must walk round to reception and line up outside until they are asked to enter. **Students should not arrive on site before 8.20am please.** I would appreciate your support in reiterating these messages to students. The current system aims to minimise congestion and contact between students in different year groups on the pathways and as they enter and exit the academy.

## Bike Racks

We will also be labelling up bike racks for particular year groups to avoid the mixing of students from different year groups for any length of time.

## The school day

A reminder that the majority of lessons will take place in their zoned area and classrooms allocated to that year group. If a student has a specialist lesson such as PE or music/drama/dance or technology they will be asked to line up on the playground and their teacher will collect them from there in order to move them around the academy. It is important that where possible students remain in their zone and when moving around the academy are vigilant and keep their distance from other year groups.

## Movement around the school

We have obviously minimised significantly the movement of students around the academy and it is important that students quickly grasp the areas that they can be in and how they should move around the academy. There is more signage up on walls and, on the floors, indicating how students should move through the corridors. The walkway between the main building and canteen is not an area students can congregate in during breaktimes. This will enable students who do need to move between buildings to do so without having to mix with other year groups. Students need to remember to think about where they are walking and not simply walk through the middle of another year group. Staff are out on lesson change overs supervising students and I am pleased to say that the new routines are beginning to embed.

## Social times

As you are aware we are staggering our breaks and this seems to be working well. Students will have a designated time to go to the canteen and there will be two separate entry and lining up points for each year group. This was working well last week and I am sure as the days and weeks pass these new routines will become second nature to students.

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## Money for food

A reminder that the two machines (one in reception and a further on in the Hub) where students can put cash onto their card are no longer in use. This means that all money on students' cards must be added via Paypoint (you would need to request a bar code from the finance team) or ParentPay. Further information about ParentPay can be found here on our website: <http://www.staldhelms-academy.co.uk/parents/parentpay/> **Please ensure you support your child with this as it will not be possible to purchase food without their card and their card will need to be credited.**

If you are a parent of a new Year 7 student, thank you for providing them with a snack and a packed lunch for the first two weeks initially whilst we get their ID cards printed. If students are entitled to a free school meal then these are provided and students must collect them from the canteen. I am pleased to say that our IT manager is working on ID cards and these will be ready by the end of this week. **From next Monday (21<sup>st</sup> September) Year 7 will be able to use their cards to purchase food.** A letter with details of how to set up your Parentpay account has been posted to all parents and carers of Year 7 and to those parents/carers of a student who has recently joined another year group so please look out for this.

## Water fountains

**The water fountains remain turned off. Please ensure your child brings a water bottle to school every day.** A polite reminder that fizzy drinks/energy drinks are not permitted in school at any times and they will be confiscated if students are found to have brought them into school.

## Illness/Medical Issue

No students, staff or other adults can come into school if they have coronavirus symptoms and I would ask you to be vigilant to this. If anyone in school becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough or high temperature, or has a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell, they must be sent home. Anyone who displays symptoms of Coronavirus can and should get a test and I would ask you to inform the school of the outcome of the test immediately. We are finalising the process for enabling students to access their learning remotely if they have to self-isolate and this will be sent out in a further communication this week. **We will be using the Microsoft TEAMS platform and all students have an email and a log in for this. This platform can be accessed on a phone in addition to laptops/tablets and PC's.** We will be spending time in the next week ensuring students are familiar with this platform and know how to access their learning through it.

## Meetings/Visitors on site

As you will be aware I explained in my July letter that parents will not be able to come into school without an appointment. **This remains the case but meetings will now have to be scheduled for after the end of the school day.** This means we have more available spaces to meet safely with you. I apologise for the inconvenience this may cause but I am sure you can understand why this has to be done. Thank you for your support with this request.

Finally, thank you for taking the time to read this letter. I know it is another long letter but it contains very important information which needs to be shared and it is imperative that all members of the school community adhere to all of these messages. Ensuring we all know and understand this information will enable us to open safely and to minimise the risk.

Kind regards



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