

Dear parents/carers,

It has been lovely welcoming students back to the academy. I hope that your child is enjoying being back and that they have had a great start to the term.

I just wanted to give you an update on some changes we have made to our behaviour systems, in the way that we reward and sanction students. Additionally, I wanted to clarify a few issues regarding attendance.

Here at the academy, we are very keen to ensure that students who do the right thing and who go above and beyond are praised appropriately. We have always tried to praise and reward students, but this year but we are trying to communicate this more with parents. One of our new measures is that every lesson, teachers will nominate a student of the lesson. You will get an email notification if your child has been nominated. There are also other times when staff will praise students so I hope that more of the communication you have from the academy will be positive. Alongside praise and rewards, there will be times when some students need to be sanctioned. The main change with this is that rather than there being lots of department detentions, all detentions will be centralised and will take place in one area. Detentions will be after school and will be given to students who have received 5 negative behaviour points or who have been placed in detention by a Head of Department, Head of Year or a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Detentions will initially be for 30 minutes for Years 7-10, although there may be times when students need an hour-long detention. All detentions for Year 11 will be for 60 minutes. Failure to attend a detention will lead to further sanctions, for example: if students miss a 30 minute detention, they will be issued with a 60 minute detention the following day. You will be sent an email notification if your child has been placed in detention.

As you know, students need to be on site for 8.20am as lessons start at 8.30am. From Monday, at 8.25am all gates will close other than the gate opposite reception, this gives students time to get to their lessons on time. Students arriving late to lesson will receive a negative behaviour point.

In relation to attendance, you will know a lot of this information and I sent it in my previous letters but I have been asked to clarify a few matters.

If your child is displaying any of the 3 symptoms of COVID:

- They must go for a PCR test and isolate until they get the result. If this is negative they can return to the academy. If it is positive then they need to isolate for 10 days from the start of symptoms.
- If you cannot take them for a PCR test then they will need to isolate for 10 days from the start of symptoms.
- If you choose not to take your child for a PCR test this may be recorded as an unauthorised absence in which case work will not be set for the child.

If your child has been identified as a close contact or lives in a household where somebody has tested positive **but they do not have symptoms:**

- The advice is to go for a PCR test. There is no requirement for the child to isolate whilst they are waiting for their result. If the result is positive then they start their isolation period from the date of their test.
- Whilst it may seem counter-intuitive to many of us, if the child's result is negative then the expectation is that they attend school. If they do not attend school in this circumstance then this may be recorded as an unauthorised absence in which case work will not be set for the child.
- If your child develops symptoms then you would follow the steps above.

I know that there is a lot in the press about vaccinating secondary school children against COVID. At the time of writing, we have not heard anything about this process. As soon as we do, I will be in touch.

As is common at the start of term, the road outside of the academy is especially busy. Can I please ask that you are respectful of others by finding an appropriate place to stop or park, that you do not perform U turns in the road and that you encourage your child to cross using the crossing.

Lastly, it has been fantastic this week to see the start of period 6 involving subject support and enrichments. Attendance has been great and it is lovely for us to start to get some of our extra-curricular activities up and running again.

Thank you for your help and support in ensuring that we have had such a smooth start to the academic year.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs R Coning
Head of School