17 July 2020

Dear Parent / Carer and Students,

As we reach the end of term in what has been a very strange and difficult year, once again I would like to thank parents for their support and understanding. Also, thanks to all the students who have engaged well with online learning. There have been many examples of excellent work submitted and positive dialogue with teachers who have been in contact with students. Despite this, we know that it has not been the same and that some of our students have struggled with the challenges that this lockdown has created.

For obvious reasons, we really welcome the government announcement that all children in all year groups will return to full time education from September and we have been working on the plans and provision to ensure this is provided in as safe an environment as possible.

This letter contains important information about September. It represents our current thinking, however, you will be aware that the picture is ever-changing. I will write to parents in the last week of the summer holidays with any changes to what is outlined here, or with additional details.

**Coming back to school**

* Tuesday 1 September: closed to all students
* Wednesday 2 September: open to **year 7** and **year 11** students only
* Thursday 3 September and beyond: open to **all students**

**The school day**

Students will be allowed into the building from 8:45am and lessons will start at 9:00am prompt. If your child is dropped off or walks to school please could you take this into account. Students who arrive after 9:00am will be considered late and will receive a sanction, according to our policy.

As we enter the new academic year, after a period of significant uncertainty, we would like to reassure and encourage all parents that students should be in school 100% of the time. The advantages this will bring to you and your child are endless, not only for them to continue with their education but for their own wellbeing. We are looking forward to welcoming back our academy community, and allowing everyone to continue with their learning journey. The Secretary of State has written to me today. In his letter he impresses upon schools the importance of attendance. The following is taken from his letter:

“As the schools guidance explains, from the beginning of the new school year the usual rules on school attendance will apply, including:

* parents’ duty to ensure that their child attends school, where the child is a registered pupil at school and they are of compulsory school age;
* schools’ responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence;
* the option to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices, in line with local authorities’ codes of conduct.”

Please also be aware that from September onwards attendance at school will be mandatory and, as such, all pupils are expected to be in attendance. The academy will be liaising with the local authority for those pupils who are absent from school.

Although we understand that some parents will have concerns about a return in terms of health and safety we assure you that we will be taking all the necessary measures to follow the guidance. This will include an expectation for families to self-isolate and test if there are any symptoms.

The school day will finish at 3:10pm. However, to ensure that all students leave the building in a staggered way some students will start to leave the site at 3:00pm. If you collect your child please be available from 3:00pm. We understand that this may mean waiting for a short amount of time but it will help us to keep all children safe.

**Year Groups**

We’ll be making a number of changes to the physical layout of the building and the way that we structure our academy. A key change we will be making is moving from houses to year groups in September. Prior to Covid-19, our house system suited us well and students benefited from the approach that vertical tutoring brought. We feel the pandemic has changed this and that each year group is going to have different needs that are better met through arranging the school in year groups. Alongside the Heads of Year, each year group has been assigned a senior leadership link:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Year 7 | Mrs Tyson and Mr Brook | Mr Harper |
| Year 8 | Mrs Neil | Mr Sohel |
| Year 9 | Mr Clarke | Miss Barraclough |
| Year 10 | Mr Cook | Ms Stothers |
| Year 11 | Mrs Giles | Miss Cheetham |

**Year 8 into Year 9**

In the past students would have picked their GCSE options at this point. However, given the timing of the pandemic we plan to continue with a three-year key stage three. This is to ensure that students have a solid base before moving into their key stage four studies. In September we will be talking to students about this and explaining to them when they will pick their options.

**Lunches**

We would strongly encourage students to bring packed lunches. For those on free-school meals there will be a limited choice available. In September we will be introducing a new cashless payment system for lunches. This will allow parents to top-up their child’s account using the MCAS app.

**Uniform**

As a reminder to the letter sent on 10 July, students will be required to be in full school uniform. Full details of the uniform can be found here: <https://sowerby.trinitymat.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Uniform-Leaflet-TASB.pdf>

The last page of this leaflet details our uniform suppliers.

**Equipment**

As a minimum students should bring with them:

Planner (a new planner will be given to students on their first day)

Pen

Pencil

Ruler

Bag

Scientific calculator (it is really important that students buy this model: Casio fx-83GTX)

**PE lessons**

Students should come to school on their first day in their uniform. On the day that they have PE, students will be asked to come into school in their PE kit. We will give further details to students when they return to school.

**Social distancing expectations**

The government guidance on social distancing is regularly changing and it is vital that students are following all guidance. If we reasonably believe that young people are not following social distancing and/or self-isolation guidance (where applicable), we reserve the right to refuse entrance to school premises. We understand that this can be difficult, but it is crucial that the advice is followed to ensure we protect all young people, our staff and all of our wider families.

**After school**

All after-school enrichment activities and interventions are expected to start in week 3.  Socially distant detentions will run from the first day back. Please note we will continue to run with the same-day detention system that we introduced last year.

**Bus Travel**

For those pupils who access the school bus service, please be aware that these buses have returned to their original pick-up and drop-off times, which can be accessed via: <https://www.wymetro.com/your-school/a-z-school-finder/t/trinity-academy-sowerby-bridge/> Guidance has been given to all schools who currently use the combined authority service which states *‘In following the Government guidance allowing higher occupancy rates, we will be using all seating capacity on buses. On secondary school services, all children will be required to wear a face covering unless exempted for medical or other reasons.’* As always, staff will be present for pupils arriving and leaving the building to ensure this transition remains as safe and smooth as possible.

**Behaviour for Learning**

As the Academy returns to full classes of students, we think it’s absolutely crucial for our high standards of Behaviour for Learning (BfL) to continue as they were prior to lockdown. As such, the academy will be expecting all pupils to adhere to the current BfL policy upon their return including pupils staying for detention should they be required to do so. The BfL policy can be accessed via the academy website.

This will ensure a safe and welcoming environment, which will allow lessons to remain calm and purposeful. We want to ensure the entire academy feel known, valued and understood and this will allow us to do so.

For now I want to wish all families the very best for the summer, hoping that all stay safe and enjoy a break from home schooling. I look forward to September and seeing the academy community together again.

Yours sincerely,



Mr C Johnson – Principal