



Wath Academy

17 July 2020

September Opening

Dear Parent / Carer

I hope this letter finds you and your families safe and well. We would like to thank you for your continued support and patience during these challenging times. The school is looking forward to full attendance in September, in line with the national government requirement that all schools are open for all year groups and students are able to access a broad curriculum. Of course, we appreciate that there may be some anxiety amongst some parents and students given the length of the enforced absence from school. As a result, we have outlined below an overview of our key strategies and systems of control, which will be used to minimise Covid-19 risks in September.

Underpinning all of these plans will be the safety of both students and staff. Our detailed risk assessment will be shared on our website from Monday 24 August 2020, in readiness for September. Our plans and risk assessment are based on the government's systems of control to:

1. Minimise contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have Covid-19 symptoms, or have someone in their household who do, do not attend school
2. Clean hands thoroughly more often than usual
3. Ensure good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach
4. Introduce enhanced cleaning, including of frequently touched surfaces
5. Minimise contact between individuals and maintain social distancing wherever possible
6. Where necessary, wear appropriate personal protective equipment
7. Engage with the NHS Test and Trace process
8. Manage confirmed cases of Covid-19 amongst the school community
9. Contain any outbreak by following local health protection team advice.

Further government guidance on the full opening of schools in September can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

We have fully reviewed and micro-scripted all student movement around the academy site to ensure all government guidance is followed. We are aware that government guidance can change and we will monitor this closely over the summer and react accordingly. You will also receive further communication from us w/c 24 August 2020, to finalise our September plans.

All students will return to the Academy on **Wednesday 2 September 2020** (see details below).

As a result, we will be practising strict social distancing and employing regular opportunities for frequent hand-sanitising. There will be hand sanitiser available for students on every desk in every classroom.

In order to restrict social interaction, students will be working in 'bubbles'/groups, in order to reduce interaction with other students. We will be restricting the movement of students around the building to the bare minimum to successfully deliver the curriculum. Students will be rigorously required to follow a one-way system around the building to reduce the possibility of unnecessary interaction with other students.

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Students in different year groups will wear different coloured lanyards in order to make it clearer for staff when rigorously over-seeing any movement of students around the building. Movement around the building will be staggered. In addition, students will remain in consistent teaching bases for much longer periods of time in order to reduce the necessity for movement around the building.

We are hoping to retain the existing start and finish times where we can and any slight movement in this is outlined below. We will, however, employ a variety of different entrances, which will be year group specific, to reduce further the opportunity for students to mix across year groups. Students will be expected to wear full school uniform. The national government has made it very clear that it is safe for students to attend school in their uniform and that this will not need to be washed on a daily basis. Students will be able to wear a face mask in school. This is not a government requirement but we understand how some students and their parents might feel more confident in attending by wearing a face covering.

Attendance

Government guidance has made it very clear that it is vital for **all** children to return to school to minimise the possible longer-term impact of the pandemic on children's education, wellbeing and wider development. Missing out on more time in the classroom risks students falling further behind. This means from September the usual rules on school attendance will apply, including:

- parents' duty to secure that their child attends regularly at school where the child is a registered pupil at school and they are of compulsory school age
- school's responsibility to record attendance and follow up absence
- the availability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices, in line with the local authority's code of conduct.

First Day Arrival Times

- Students in Years 10, 12 and 13 should be on site by **8.15am**, unless using a Marsland Travel bus
- Students in all other year groups should arrive by **8.25am**
- Students will be based in tutor groups until lunch time on the first day. Students will be given their new time table in this session. This time will also be used to induct students into the new systems and give them an opportunity to walk the site.
- Following the first day, all students should arrive for **8:25am**.

Entry to the site

- Students in Years 12 and 13 should enter the site via the bus turning circle gate and then use the back door of the 6th form study area to enter the building
- Students in Year 11 should enter the site via the bus turning circle gate and then use the stairs to walk down to the canteen
- Students in Years 7 and 8 should use the Festival Road entrance
- Students in Years 9 and 10 should enter the site via the two main Sandygate pedestrian entrances.

Movement around the school site

- Students will then be based in separate year group locations before school, at break time and at lunch time. Each of these areas includes designated toilets and an outside space. On entry to the school, students will be directed to the relevant location. The locations are:
 - Years 12 and 13 – 6th Form Study Area
 - Year 11 – Canteen
 - Year 10 – Main Hall
 - Year 9 – Year 8/9 Social Area
 - Year 8 – PE Gyms
 - Year 7 – PE Sports Hall

- A clear one way system will be in place and followed at all times to ensure social distancing on the corridors. This system will be taped to the floor on all corridors and staircases. This system will ensure there is no crossing or overtaking.
- Movement times around the building will be staggered at the start of the day and at all transition points. Students will move around the corridors in 'bubbles'.
- Students will be given a new lanyard in September. There will be a different coloured lanyard for each year group. Students should arrive on the first day with their existing red lanyard.
- Students must attend school in full school uniform as expected by the latest government guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-in-the-autumn-term>
- An extensive 'active support' team will be in place on all corridors during lesson change over.

Break and lunch time

- Movement time to break and lunch will be staggered. Students will be based in separate zones at break and lunch. Each zone will have its own serving arrangements. No food or drinks will be available at break. Food (including hot food) will be available in each zone at lunch time. Packed lunches will be allowed.

Lessons

- Rather than having 6 x 50 minute lessons per day, students will have 3 x 100 minute lessons per day. This will rotate on a two week timetable so that students will still receive their normal timetable over a two week period. This will minimise the amount of movement each day and ensure all students will still receive a broad and balanced curriculum. Students will do non-contact sports in PE.
- Tutor time content will be delivered by the student's Period 1 teacher. This eliminates the need for movement between tutor time and lesson one.
- All classrooms will be set out in rows facing the front. Teachers will teach from at least 2 metres away, from the front of the class, in a taped zoned area.
- Students will have lessons in the normal locations e.g. Science in the Science department, Art in the Art department.
- A 500ml bottle of hand sanitiser will be on every desk in every classroom. The pre-starter activity in every lesson will involve students sanitising their hands. Wipes will also be available on every desk.
- Lidded bins will be in every classroom to promote the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach'.
- All toilets in the building will be open. Reactive cleaners will be in place throughout the day to clean the toilets regularly.
- All teachers will have a radio.
- Students will be escorted to the toilet by a member of the 'active support team'.
- An extensive 'active support' team will be in place every lesson, patrolling the corridors.

End of the day

The end of the day will be staggered. The day will end at the following times for different year groups:

- Years 11, 12 and 13 – 14:45
- Years 9 and 10 – 14:40
- Years 7 and 8 – 14:35.

Buses

National government guidelines are to avoid public transport unless there is no alternative and to encourage the consideration of alternative travel arrangements. If active travel (such as walking or cycling) is not an option, please plan your child's journey in advance and remember to allow more time, as travel may take longer. Space on the commercial public transport network is severely limited, with only around 45% of pre

Covid-19 space available. It can't therefore be guaranteed that a space on a usual public service route will be available for your child.

South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive (SYPTTE) are continuing to liaise with Marsland Travel, who operate the two buses which directly use the academy site. SYPTTE have advised us that they believe there will be the usual bus service in place for students, with each bus operating as it's own 'bubble'. This would of course mean social distancing measures would not need to be followed. SYPTTE will continue to update the academy based on the most current government guidance and we will of course pass this information on to you.

Assemblies

Individual year group assemblies will still take place; these will be strictly in line with government guidance as students will be in their year group 'bubbles'.

Behaviour

- As previously communicated, the academy's behaviour policy has been updated to respond to the unique circumstances of the Covid-19 outbreak. The safety of students is of paramount importance and therefore students should expect to receive the appropriate consequence if there is any breach of the behaviours outlined as Covid-19 in the updated behaviour policy.
- Detentions will operate as per school policy although the spaces employed will allow for the appropriate distancing of students
- Our behaviour policy has been modified to ensure all aspects of the government guidance is followed
- Our conduct card system will not operate in September. We will review this on a weekly basis.

Homework

Homework will continue to be set in the usual way via the Satchel: One app.

Sport & Extra-Curricular Activities

Physical exercise, in the form of, non-contact sport will be provided within PE lessons but there will not be any extra-curricular activities beyond those that can operate remotely and therefore there will not be sporting fixtures until further notice.

As already outlined, the arrangements will evolve as necessary over these next five weeks in response to ongoing government advice and guidance, however, we will contact you again w/c 24 August with a detailed update for the return on Wednesday 2 September.

These continue to be testing times but, working together, I am sure the safe return of students will bring huge long-term benefits for the mental health and well-being of our young people as well as the undoubted benefits of a return to full-time education.

Yours sincerely

J Taylor

Principal