

24 August 2020

September Reopening – Year 8

Dear Parent / Carer

We hope that this letter finds you and your family well. It has been a long five months without seeing our academy full of its usual vibrancy, and as it is for us, I am sure your attention will now be turning to next week and the start of a new academic year.

In July, we wrote to you outlining how we expect the re-opening of our academy will work. This week, the risk assessment has been reviewed and we remain confident that our plans will enable us to welcome back all our students as safely as possible.

The Academy teams have been working hard over the break to ensure that we are ready to reopen and that we are minimising the risk from Covid-19 as much as possible. This letter details some of the main points which we are implementing and some key reminders to ensure that we are all ready to return in a safe manner.

Measures to promote the safety of staff and pupils

At Retford Oaks we will be:

- operating staggered start, break, lunch and end times
- keeping students in “year group bubbles” during the course of the day.
- reducing the movement of students around the building
- ensuring that any movement around the building uses outside routes unless the weather is extremely inclement.
- removing assemblies
- promoting “Catch it, Bin it, Kill it” respiratory hygiene
- insisting on the regular use of alcohol-based hand gel and actively encouraging parents to ensure that students carry alcohol-based gel with them at all times
- increasing the daily cleaning to ensure that areas are cleaned throughout the course of the day
- ensuring, wherever practical, that a 2M distance is maintained between staff and students
- reducing the use of shared resources used in lessons
- ensuring that all students sit in rows facing forward and do not move from their seats during lessons – except where specific curriculum requirements prevent this when the students will be expected to maintain social distance

Face Masks

Based on current evidence, the government does not recommend the use of face coverings in school. Wearing a face mask within a school setting is thought to have a negative impact on communication and subsequently effect the quality of education for students. In addition, misuse of a face mask may inadvertently increase the risk of Covid-19 transmission.

However, the Academy will support any student who wishes to wear a mask during the school day. If a student is choosing to wear a mask it must be an actual mask - not a scarf, balaclava etc. Also the masks must be plain - no logos etc. If masks do not meet our requirements, students will be expected to remove them. The Academy will not supply face masks. Obviously at time of writing this is an area of guidance that is developing rapidly and we may need to change the guidelines as the national advice changes.

Students who are ill

Where a student is unable to attend school due to illness, parents should phone the school attendance line and leave a message detailing the student's name and the reasons for absence. It is imperative that parents are specific about the reason for absence and whether or not it is a suspected case of Covid-19. Where students or family members are suspected to have symptoms of Covid-19 they should book a test and then inform the school of the result.

Anyone who develops virus like symptoms during the school day will be immediately isolated and parents will be required to collect or authorise the student to make their own way home immediately. The students should then be booked in for a Covid-19 test and the school informed of the outcome of the test. Any siblings in the academy will also be sent home.

The recognised symptoms for Covid-19 are:

- A new continuous cough
- High temperature (due to the inaccuracies in temperature measuring the academy will not be routinely checking students' temperatures)
- Loss or change to the student's normal sense of taste or smell.

NHS guidance relating to coronavirus symptoms is available at:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/>

NHS Test & Trace

The academy will be fully complying with the NHS test and trace system. Parents are requested to ensure they are familiar with this system using the latest guidance via <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-test-and-trace-how-it-works>

Contact details

It is more important than ever that the Academy has up to date contact details for parents and any additional contacts. The Academy will communicate with parents through phone calls, text messages, emails and Go 4 Schools (G4S) App notifications. It is strongly advised that parents and students with smart phones download the G4S app to provide up to date information about your child. Logon details will be issued in September. Please contact Mrs Upton (LUpton@retfordoaks-ac.org.uk) if you need to update the contact details we have for your child.

Start of term

Year 8 will start school at 9:00 and students should be on site by **8:55 on Thursday 3 September 2020**. Students should not arrive at the academy any earlier than 8:30. School will finish at **3:30**.

The school will operate in year group bubbles with students moving within their bubble throughout the day.

Some students will have PE on the first day and therefore it is advised that all students bring their PE kit.

School Uniform & Hair Styles

As per the latest government guidance the Academy will require students to be in full school uniform in September. Details of the uniform requirements can be found at <https://www.retfordoaks-ac.org.uk/parents/uniform-and-equipment/>.

Equipment required by each student each day.

- 2 pens – Black ink preferred
- Pencil
- Ruler
- Rubber
- Reading book – Please note that the Learning Resource Centre will not be available, and students should therefore ensure that they bring a reading book to school with them
- A bag to carry their books and PE Kit – All students will be issued with their books for all subjects on day 1 and it is the student's responsibility to ensure that they bring their books to school each day.

Students are also encouraged to bring

- A refillable water bottle (taken home washed and refilled each night) – Please note the drinking fountains have been disconnected to prevent infection. Water and other drinks are available from the school canteen
- Their own alcohol hand gel
- Tissues
- Outdoor coat – Students will be outside at a number of points during the day except in the most inclement weather.

Arriving at school

The government are actively encouraging students and families to walk or cycle where possible. Social distancing should be maintained during the journey to the Academy. Staff will be at the front of the school each morning to meet and direct the students as they arrive.

Students arriving on foot

Students should enter via the underpass from West Carr Road or via the main pedestrian gates at the front of school if coming from Babworth. Parents walking with their children to school should not enter the school site and ensure that they maintain social distancing.

Students arriving on a bike/scooter.

Students are encouraged to wear cycle helmets and ensure that their bike/scooter is in a full roadworthy condition including having a set of working lights for use in inclement weather and on the darker nights.

Students should dismount on entry to the school site and walk their bikes to the bike sheds where they should be left in a safe manner and secured to the bike racks – bikes/scooters should be locked to the racks. The Academy accepts no responsibility for loss or damage to any bike or scooter.

The Academy withholds the right to ban students from using bikes and scooters where they are not being ridden responsibly.

Students arriving by car

Parents should move onto site through the main gates and up the main drive towards St Giles School. Students should be dropped off in the marked bays on the school side of the road. Parents should not get out of their cars. Once the students are dropped off parents should continue up the drive, round the roundabout next to St Giles and then make their way off site. We ask that parents do not get out of their cars unless in an emergency.

Students arriving on public transport / school buses.

Students will be met as they arrive, and then directed to hand washing and mask removal facilities as per the latest guidance prior to making their way through the year group entrance. Face coverings should be provided by parents and are not available from the school or bus company. Current guidance encourages parents to avoid the use of public transport where possible. Please contact Mrs Rank (CRank@retfordoaks-ac.org.uk) with all enquiries regarding transport to and from the Academy.

Staff will be on duty outside the front of school each day to ensure that students are directed to the correct entrance so that the year groups remain separated.

The end of the day

Students walking home

Students will be dismissed from the front of school and will be expected to maintain social distancing on the way home. If you are collecting your child and walking home with them please do not gather at the school gates but wait nearer to the roundabout and maintain social distancing where possible.

Students on bikes and scooters

Students should walk with their bikes until they have left the school site.

Students on school buses / public transport

Students will be expected to complete hand washing routines and put on their face coverings prior to getting onto the bus. Face coverings should be provided by parents and are not available from the school or bus company. Whilst some bus operators may provide hand sanitiser on board, please be aware that this is a not a compulsory requirement of the bus operator.

Students being collected by car

Parents should wait in the front “visitor carpark” on the right, prior to the main school barriers. Please note that for the safety of our students, the carparks and driveway will be “locked down” and priority given to pedestrians at the end of school day. Once the majority of students have left the site only then will vehicles be allowed to leave – this normally takes about 5 minutes.

We request that parents do not get out of their cars and gather at the crossing.

Timings of the day

| Time | Activity |
|-------|--|
| 8:00 | Gates Open – Year 8 should not arrive before 8:30 where possible |
| 9:00 | AM Reg in Period 1 Room |
| 9:05 | Period 1 |
| 10:00 | Period 2 |
| 10:50 | Break |
| 11:10 | Period 3 |
| 12:05 | Period 4 |
| 12.55 | LUNCH |
| 13:25 | Period 5 |
| 14:20 | Drop Everything and Read |

| | |
|-------|---------------|
| 14:40 | Period 6 |
| 15:30 | End of School |

Attendance

From the start of term, it is expected that all students attend school every day. Schools are therefore under a duty of care to ensure that we know why any student is absent from school and to follow this up. This may lead to the Academy recommending that the local authority issue a Fixed Penalty Notice for non-attendance.

From the 1 August the Government's categorisations around clinically vulnerable and clinically extremely vulnerable students changes. Parents are reminded of their responsibility to inform the academy of the medical needs of their children prior to them attending school. Therefore, we request that all parents of students who are clinically vulnerable and clinically extremely vulnerable confirm this via email with your attendance team through Mrs Upton Lupton@retfordoaks-ac.org.uk.

Students with specific medical conditions and requirements

Please ensure that the school is aware of any specific medical conditions and requirements that your child has.

Key Contact Points – Year 8

Year 8 Leader – Mr Noble – jnoble@retfordoaks-ac.org.uk

Year 8 SLT Link – Mrs West – jwest@retfordoaks-ac.org.uk

Year 8 Administrator – Mrs Woollard wwoollard@retfordoaks-ac.org.uk

Year 8 Administrator – Mrs Clarke Nclarke@retfordoaks-ac.org.uk

SENCO – Miss S Truseler – struseler@retfordoaks-ac.org.uk

Main Reception - Office@retfordoaks-ac.org.uk

School rules

All normal school rules apply and students who break the rules will be sanctioned. The school operates a restorative justice programme, and any instances of poor behaviour are dealt with, in the first instance, during the Academy day. Where an afterschool detention is required, parents will be informed and given appropriate notice about when the detention will take place. Parents will be responsible to ensure that the student is able to get home at the end of the detention.

Specific additions to the school behaviour system have been made in relation to Covid-19. Any student who persistently or deliberately threatens the safety of both staff and students by refusing to comply with hygiene routines and social distancing will be sanctioned. This includes displaying any Covid-19 anti-social behaviours for example, pretending to cough/sneeze on students, deliberately touching other students' personal possessions, or making threats made around the distribution of the virus.

The school canteen

In order to reduce the risk of transmission, the school operates cashless catering and parents should ensure that students always have sufficient money on their accounts to pay for food. Where possible this should be done through the online portal. These accounts will be set up as soon as the students are registered. For the first few days in September students will need to bring cash. £2.50 will be enough for the main meal and a drink. <https://portal.squidcard.com/LoginPortal/>

The canteen will be running a reduced menu in September (see details attached). Students will have two opportunities to access food during the day. Due to the Covid-19 restrictions we are unable to offer breakfast in September. We will look to reintroduce this as soon as we can.

All food must be consumed in the school dining room, whether this food is bought from the school canteen or a packed lunch brought from home.

PE

In line with the latest guidance, students will be expected to take part in Physical Education and we will be prioritising outside sport in all but the most inclement weather.

School Clubs

School clubs will not operate for at least the first two weeks in September, after which, we will begin to offer as many clubs as possible without putting the students at risk through cross bubble contamination.

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Visitors / Parents coming into school

Visitors to the Academy must be kept to a minimum and visits are strictly by appointment only. Where possible these should take place outside of school hours. We understand that there may be occasions where parents may wish to see a member of staff, unfortunately for most cases this will not be possible and we will offer telephone / email discussions instead. We would politely request that parents do not enter the Academy building unless a meeting has been pre-arranged. In exceptional circumstances, a short notice meeting will be possible with an available member of staff. In all cases, contacting the Academy first will allow us to help parents with any questions or concerns they may have. Any on site visitors will be expected to follow hand sanitising and social distance protocols.

Specific arrangements for 3 September

In the morning, staff will meet students at the front of the school and show them where to go. The first session of the day will involve the usual administration and issuing of timetables before lessons begin mid morning.

We are committed to ensuring that parents and students are supported through what is a stressful time in normal circumstances, and the addition of Covid-19 makes this even more challenging.

Throughout the holidays, the school office will be closed so please direct any questions to the office email account (office@retfordoaks-ac.org.uk) which will be monitored regularly and any questions will be answered.

I look forward to welcoming the students to the school in September.

Yours faithfully,



Mr Chris West
Principal
Cwest@retfordoaks-ac.org.uk