

1st September 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

I hope this letter finds you and your family well and that your child has had a restful summer break, ready to start back at the Academy for the new school year! I am writing to confirm the arrangements set out in my letter from July, so that you are fully informed about our plans for the coming term.

We have continued to ensure that we are up to date with the latest guidance relating to Covid-19 and the reopening of schools, and that all possible measures have been implemented to ensure the safety of our staff and pupils upon our return. Whilst I am sure that you may have some anxieties about your child returning to school, please be assured that their safety is paramount and that we will continue to follow all government guidance.

Attendance

Attendance at school is mandatory from September and all pupils must return. Given the amount of time that pupils have missed in school, it is absolutely imperative that they are in school every day, ready to learn. Please contact the relevant year team for support if you have any concerns regarding your child's attendance.

Bubbles

Pupils will be placed within year group bubbles so that lessons are able to be taught in their usual way. The timetable has been amended to reduce movement around the school whilst still allowing pupils to access the full curriculum. It is therefore vital for the maintenance of these bubbles that pupils arrive at their designated time below.

Staggered opening

Pupils from different year groups will arrive at different times and enter the building via different entrances. Please make sure that you are aware of the specific times for your child.

Year Group	Arrival Time	Entrance	Assembly Point	Departure Time	Departure	Start Date
7	8.30am	Front Gate	Courtyard 1	3.20pm	Back Gate	3rd September
8	8.30am	Back Gate	Courtyard 2	3.20pm	Front Gate	7th September
9	8.45am	Back Gate	Courtyard 2	3.30pm	Back Gate	7th September
10	8.45am	Front Gate	Courtyard 1	3.30pm	Front Gate	7th September
11*	9.00am	Back Gate	Straight to lessons	4.20pm	Back Gate	7th September (meet in courtyard 2 on the 1st day)

12	9.00am (10.00am on 7th Sept)	Reception	Straight to lessons	3.30pm	Reception	7th September (meet in courtyard 2 on the 1st day)
13	9.00am (10.00am on 7th Sept)	Reception	Straight to lessons	3.30pm	Reception	7th September (meet in courtyard 2 on the 1st day)

* In order to support Year 11 pupils to catch up on work missed during lockdown, we will be running an additional compulsory period at the end of the day for all pupils which will take place between 3.30pm-4.20pm. Please refer to the separate letter on our website for Year 11 parents regarding these arrangements.

At this time, we are **unable** to offer Breakfast Club but we will keep this under constant review as the government guidance is updated.

Arriving at School

If a parent needs to accompany their child to school, we ask that only ONE parent does so. When pupils arrive they will be asked to clean their hands either by washing them or using a hand sanitizer dispenser before settling in the classroom.

Use of Masks

The government is not recommending universal use of masks in all schools. Schools that teach children in years 7 and above and which are **not** under specific local restriction measures have the discretion to require face coverings for pupils, staff and visitors in areas outside the classroom where social distancing cannot easily be maintained.

Given that we are not in a local lockdown area, at this stage we will not ask pupils to wear masks. This decision will be reviewed as necessary should the situation change.

However, should you wish your child to wear a mask whilst at school, in communal areas, i.e. during break times, they are free to do so. Any coverings worn should be of a plain colour and suitable for the school environment. It is important to note that the wearing of masks in classrooms is not recommended as they can have a negative impact on teaching and learning.

If you do decide that you wish your child to wear a mask, please ensure that they understand how to wear them safely throughout the day, as they will need to be responsible for using them appropriately. Further information can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-in-education/face-coverings-in-education>

Use of Public Transport

Face coverings are currently compulsory on public transport. Therefore, if your child uses the buses to get to school, please ensure that they have appropriate face masks.

If pupils choose to remove their face covering once they are no longer on public transport, they will be required to safely do so before they enter the school site. Disposable masks will need to be placed in the lidded bins at the entrance points, whilst reusable masks should be stored safely in a plastic bag and kept in school bags throughout the day.

Uniform, Bags and Water Bottles

All pupils should return to school in full school uniform. Every child should arrive at school with a rucksack sized bag which will enable them to keep their books, their own equipment (stationery etc.) and water bottle which they must keep with them at all times. Our water fountains are currently turned off and will remain so for the time being. Please can you therefore ensure that your child arrives at school with enough water to last the day.

PE

On the days that pupils have PE, they should come to school in their PE kit. They will remain in this all day as the changing facilities will not be open. On the first day all pupils should arrive in normal school uniform.

Break and Lunch Times

Bubbles of pupils will be kept apart at break and lunchtimes and toilet facilities will also be monitored to ensure that social distancing requirements are met. Pupils will be able to purchase lunch, but for the time being only limited options will be available.

Cleaning

We have a thorough cleaning and hygiene regime in place and have contracted external suppliers to carry out an up to date risk assessment ready for September. Our full health and safety protocol is on the website on the Coronavirus page so that you can see in detail the processes that have been put in place.

Pupils Showing Symptoms

If your child develops Covid related symptoms please ensure that they are kept at home and do not return to school unless they receive a negative test result. Any pupil who tests positive, or who has been in contact with someone who has tested positive, should self-isolate as per the Government's guidance. In order to ensure the safety of the whole school, it is vital that you inform us as soon as possible if your child is unwell and give an outline of their symptoms.

Finally, I'd like to thank the families of Folkestone Academy for your continued support during this difficult time. Please do not hesitate to get in touch with us if you have any queries.

Yours faithfully



Mr Steve Shaw
Head of School