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Richard Brand: Headteacher

27th August 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

I do hope you and your family have had an enjoyable summer break and have had the chance to spend time with families and friends after what has been an incredibly challenging few months.

As we approach the start of term and a new school year I thought it would be helpful to write to you to briefly remind parents and students of some of the measures we are taking to ensure that we minimise any risk. I am sure you will have noticed the widespread media coverage surrounding the re-opening of schools from next week. I didn't disagree when the Prime Minister said earlier this week that it is "vitally important for students to go back to school as soon as possible" and we are hugely excited about welcoming everyone back into our school community.

At the end of the summer term, I sent a video communicating the safety measures we will be implementing when students return from Wednesday. The link to that video is here <https://www.loom.com/share/0f2e5d4feb70473b923b14a73176d6c6>. These re-opening plans remain largely unchanged, other than the significant message given by the government regarding the wearing of masks in public spaces.

Please be aware, responding to the latest government guidance, from the beginning of term we are expecting everyone on site (students, staff and visitors) to wear a mask when they are moving through inside communal spaces. An inside communal space is anywhere in a school building which is not a classroom or an office – this will include corridors, the canteen, school toilets and any other space where 2m gaps cannot be maintained. As per government guidance, it also includes the school buses. It does not include the school playground, astroturf or during breaks and lunches or for students who walk to and from school.

We believe that this measure sends a clear expectation that we are working to create a safe and sustainable working environment in school. All staff and visitors will also wear masks in these areas of school as well. We will review the use of facemasks regularly and communicate any changes with you as necessary.

We understand that there may be individual situations in which this decision may need further discussion. If your child was shielding and would like to wear a mask in lessons also, please contact the school at info@thedeanacademy.org and we will ensure staff are made aware of this. Additionally, if your child is unable to wear a mask because of medical or



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sensory needs, please contact the school at the same email address and we will be in touch with you to discuss further. The government guidance can be found here:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-in-education/face-coverings-in-education>

By way of a reminder please see the summary below of the other safety measures students and parents can expect to see when we re-open in full in order to keep our community safe.

Transport	All bus routes will run as normal with no reduced capacity. Students will be expected to wear masks on buses and to sit in the seat they are allocated, which will continue the year group bubbles we are running in school. Further details regarding transport can be found here. https://thedeacademy.org/2020/08/13/school-transport-in-september/
Timings & Entrance/Exit	We encourage students to walk or to cycle to school wherever possible. Those on buses to arrive 0830-0840. Those who live locally should aim to arrive 0840-0850. Members of staff will be on hand to direct year groups to certain entrances of school and students should maintain this throughout the term.
Hygiene & hand washing	Hand sanitiser will be available in each teaching room and students will be expected to make use of it as they enter each lesson. Toilet blocks will have soap available for students to use regularly throughout the day and we will be speaking to students at the beginning of term in tutor regarding the importance of good hygiene.
Year group bubbles	Students will be taught in year group bubbles, with lessons being held in specific areas of school, to limit the chance of cross-contamination in school. They will have specific break and lunchtimes to continue to mitigate this risk. We will use tutor times at the beginning of term to explain how this will work in more detail.
Limited Movement	To maintain these year group bubbles, movement between classrooms will be limited for students and staff will follow strict hygiene measures in order to lower risks. Certain entrance and exit routes will be used to stop year groups meeting wherever possible.
Reconnecting Learning	Staff have worked hard to ensure that lessons allow for learning routines to be re-established in the first week and we will be carefully evaluating learning to ensure that support is offered whenever needed. We will explain more about this in the Parent Information Evenings – please expect letters over the coming weeks or check the school website for the calendar.



Supporting your child's safety from home	<p>We understand that we will be working closely with you to ensure that everyone in the school community stays as safe as possible during these times. In order to lower risk and remove the need for unnecessary sharing of equipment, please ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students have the required equipment for lessons (pens, pencils, green pen, ruler and eraser as minimum, but you may also want them to have colouring pencils / pens, scissors and glue to minimise their use of shared items) • On wet days, students come to school in a waterproof coat • Uniform conforms to the information sent out before the summer holidays (a detailed explanation can be found on the school website)
Free time including the canteen	<p>When in the canteen, students will be required to wear a face mask to enter, collect their food and leave. They may remove it to eat. Breaks and lunch times will be staggered, and students will be required to remain within a certain area of the school site. Further details of lunch and after school clubs will be sent out at the start of term.</p>
Start of term	<p>Year 7 and 11 will start on Wednesday 2nd September Year 8, 9 and 10 will return on Thursday 3rd September</p>

Please see attached two infographics to continue to support students, parents and carers in remaining safe. Should you have any questions or queries regarding our re-opening plans specific to your child please do not hesitate to get in contact via info@thedeacademy.org.

We look forward to welcoming everyone back in September with a purposeful start to the term.

Yours sincerely



Richard Brand
Headteacher

RJB/TW – start of term-270820

