

Date: 20.10.20

End of Autumn Term 1 Communication

Dear Parent / Carer,

As we enter the Autumn 1/2 term break, I would like to thank all students, parents/carers and staff members for successfully completing 'a term like no other'. Over the summer break the leadership team planned thoroughly and extensively for the full return to school of all children not really knowing what the 'new normal' would be like. In reflection of the last 7 weeks, everyone has adapted extremely well to these new circumstances. Our new Year 7s have settled in very well, all other Year Groups have returned to the academy in a positive way and teachers have moved from classroom to classroom for each lesson on a daily basis. During the first 2 to 3 weeks we all worked exceptionally hard on adapting to and maintaining our COVID19 secure parameters, similar to most other school in the country, this taking a large part of our initial focus. But as we have progressed through this first term the focus correctly has switched to teaching + learning and generating strong outcomes that we need for all of our students. As we move into term 2, we will of course be ultra-diligent on maintaining our COVID19 systems + procedures to ensure the safety of all, and we will continue to provide a broad and balanced curriculum, including a full range of extra-curricular enrichment opportunities that most other schools will be envious of.

COVID19 Secure Measures in Place

Please see below a list of some of the measures we have taken to ensure that all members of our community are as safe as possible:

- we have purchased every student a face covering to wear in transition and public areas
- we have purchased every staff member a face shield to wear in transition and public areas
- we have bubble line up in the morning and after both food breaks to minimise mixing in corridors
- we have bubbled academy areas for different year groups to minimise mixing
- we have designated outside bubble food break areas for different year groups to minimise mixing
- we have bubbled the canteen space to minimise mixing
- we have bubble entry and exit routes into the academy
- our cleaning team is on site all day to continue sanitising throughout the day
- additional COVID19 secure cleaning regimen has been put into place across the academy
- 74 hand sanitiser machine have been installed around the academy for regular use by all
- we have purchased COVID19 secure anti-bac wet wipes and gel for each classroom and these are restocked as needed
- we have purchased several COVID19 secure anti-bac atomiser machines so that we can quickly and effectively clean learning spaces between groups as required
- every lesson has a seating plan, so we can quickly ascertain potential contacts if we were to receive notification of a confirmed positive COVID19 result

- we have made all external lettings areas COVID19 secure with extra cleaning measures put in place before and after use (including sanitizer atomiser 'bombs' let off before and after use) and use of QR code on entry

Year 11 Exams and Assessment Update

You may have seen in the news that the Government has announced this week that the summer exam series will start on 7 June 2021 and end on 2 July 2021 for almost all A Levels and GCSEs. BTEC has also announced that they are proposing to amend the BTEC exam timetable. This means that the BTEC assessment window would start on 24 May 2021 and end of 2 July 2021.

These changes are to allow students to have more time to prepare for their exams next year, as most A Levels and GCSEs will be held 3 weeks later to help address the disruption caused by the pandemic.

The Prime Minister and Education Secretary are clear that they wish the exams to go ahead, as they believe they are the fairest and most accurate way to measure a student's attainment. Whether or not the exams are actually held will probably depend on whatever the pandemic situation is at that point. Looking at what happened last summer, it is possible that a Centre Assessed Grades (CAGs) system might be employed again if exams are not possible. If this is the case, then schools and colleges will probably be asked to provide evidence about why a student should be awarded a particular grade and this is likely to come from mock exams and Key Assessments.

For this reason, we would like to continue to stress the importance of Year 11s preparing properly for these assessments. They should not be regarded as events that 'do not matter because they do not count'. The importance of revision for mocks and Key Assessments has already been outlined to students and we offer a range of pre-school support, after school intervention and 1/2 term intervention. All students will have received a ½ term intervention timetable.

Extra- Curricular Enrichment Activities

We continue to offer a full range of enrichment activities that take place before school, during both food breaks and after school. In total we have 84 different clubs and activities running and these can be seen on our [website](#). We encourage every student to take part in at least one additional activity every week.

Academy Website

I am very pleased to announce that we have a new academy [website](#) and will continue to update and configure it to be the 'go to place' for all OPA information. Please do have a look it and use it alongside our [Instagram](#) page, which we upload the day to day academy activities. In the near future we will be launching a new parental app which will provide information about your child's attendance + progress and also will be a seamless communication tool.

Safeguarding: E Safety

During this half term, a lot of students may be spending time online and we feel that this is an appropriate time to highlight some simple online safety tips to help parents/ carers make safer choices and support their children online.

Setting boundaries:

Much like the 'real world', parents / carers need to set boundaries for children online. Please discuss online boundaries and what is acceptable for them to do eg time allocation per day.

Filters and Parental Controls:

- Check that the privacy, safety and security tools on your child's devices are in place.
- Remind your children to tell you if they see something upsetting online.

For more advice, check use the following websites:

- www.net-aware.org.uk - NSPCC guide to the most popular apps and websites available online.
- www.thinkuknow.co.uk - CEOP website for advice and reporting abuse online.
- www.iwf.org.uk - Report illegal content online (including indecent images of children).

We would like to reassure you that the well-being of your child remains our highest priority and we will always update you as soon as we have any relevant information to share. Our safeguarding team should be immediately [contacted](#) to discuss concerns and any safeguarding questions that you may have.

I hope you have a restful ½ term break and very much look forward to receiving all children back to the academy on Monday 2nd November.

Kind regards

Yours sincerely

Mr Mark Roessler



Principal
Ormiston Park Academy