

27th August 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope this letter finds our community to be well having had a pleasant and enjoyable summer. Following our letter dated 17th July 2020, I would like to update you about our plans for the return to school in September. We are excited to welcome our students when they return to the academy next week.

GCSE Results 2020

Congratulations to Year 11 who received their results last week. There were so many incredible personal achievements and triumphs in a set of results that were well deserved by the whole cohort. The results were due to years of effort and hard work and the events of the recent months do not diminish the achievements of this wonderful year group. It has been a pleasure to hear of student plans moving forward to their new colleges and apprenticeships and we wish every student the best of luck for every success in the future. At the moment of writing this we still await our revised BTEC grades, but are expecting them this week.

New Colleagues

We welcome new colleagues who are joining our staffing team next week:-

Mrs Hopkins – Assistant Principal

Mr Plant – Teacher of Mathematics

Miss Jones – Teacher of English

Mrs Mellor – Subject Leader of PSHE and Teacher of PE

Miss Heath – Teacher of Science

Mrs Swaby – Administration Team Leader and Examinations and Data Officer

We wish them well in their new posts as they look forward to working with you and your children.

Return Dates

A reminder that the return dates for TQEA pupils are:-

Tuesday 1st September – planned training day

Wednesday 2nd September – planned training day

Thursday 3rd September – Year 7 and Year 11 return to school.

Friday 4th September – All year groups attend the academy

Safety and Well-being

The safety and well-being of our pupils is our priority and our Trust Estates team have been working closely with us to ensure that the academy meets all government safety guidelines. Parents/Carers and students will, understandably, have a lot of questions and the most common questions have been answered in a **Q and A document** attached to this letter.

Student well-being is a priority and we will not only ensure that students are supported in being aware of our safety protocols, but also in being clear where they can receive help and support within the academy. We understand that the return to the academy will naturally lead to different responses and feelings in our young people and, as a staff body, we will address student feelings and anxieties through our pastoral tutor and

support programme. We understand that these are extraordinary times and that some students will require extra support, nurturing and education surrounding the global events we find ourselves in. We are devoting time on our Training Day to raise awareness with staff and to ensure that they are best equipped to support our students.

Face Coverings

The Academy Transformation Trust has issued an updated and clear statement on our approach to face coverings at TQEA. Therefore:-

- Whilst it is not compulsory all staff and students are encouraged to wear masks or face coverings in corridors, canteens, changing rooms and other indoor, communal areas. Students will not be permitted to wear face coverings in lessons.
- Masks should not be worn outside whilst on school grounds.
- Face coverings must be appropriate in design. When this is not the case an alternative will be provided by the academy for the day only.
- All students are recommended to carry face coverings as they will need them on transport and in shops.
- All students will be given a tutorial on the safe use of face coverings on their first day at the academy and should have a sealed plastic bag in which they can safely and hygienically store them, after correctly folding them, when not wearing them outside or during lessons.

Please refer to the attached Q and A and the letter dated 17th July for more details. Further information can be found on our website along with our risk assessments.

Thank you for your continued support and we look forward to welcoming our pupils back to TQEA next week. We look forward to working with you in 2020/21 to secure the very best educational experience for your child in a safe environment.

We wish you a safe and pleasant end to the summer.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N Harding', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Mr N Harding
Principal
The Queen Elizabeth Academy

Attached below: Q&As

Full Academy Return – The Queen Elizabeth Academy Q and A

Q/ Do pupils have to return to their academy in September?

The government are clear that the return to school is vital for a child's education and wellbeing. Time out of school is detrimental to a child's cognitive and academic development, particularly for disadvantaged children. The risk to children themselves becoming severely ill from coronavirus is very low and there are negative health impacts of being out of school. Schools should ensure that they implement sensible and proportionate control measures that follow the health and safety hierarchy of controls to reduce the risk to the lowest reasonably practical level. Consistent bubble groups reduce the risk of transmission. Attendance from September is mandatory.

Q/ How can we be sure that all precautions have been taken with regard to safety for full re-opening?

We have met all government recommendations and had our plans approved by an independent education risk assessment team and our Trust Estates. Our risk assessments are printed on our website.

Q// What do I do if my child is exhibiting co-vid symptoms at home?

Please contact the school and explain the situation. You will not send your child to school that day, but will organise an immediate test for your child. It is essential that you communicate the results of the test to the academy as soon as you have them.

Q/ What do pupils need to do coming to school and how do they enter the academy?

We recommend that pupils, however they travel to school, arrive to the academy wearing a face covering. This should be worn as they make their way to their bubble entrance, but must be removed as they enter the school grounds to gain some fresh air before entering the building, please see Trust position on face coverings below.

Students can have their own equipment which **they must not share** and the academy will give every child their own stationary pack to use on their first day back at the academy.

Q// What are the bubble times of arrival and locations?

At 8.35am Year 7 and 10 will funnel to the left side steps to the entrance on the sports hall side of the academy near the Music rooms.

At 8:40 am Year 9 and 11 will funnel down the drive to enter the academy on the right hand fire doors near the Food rooms.

At 8:45 am Year 8 will funnel to the right hand steps to the front entrance where reception is.

On arrival all students will use the sanitation station before heading to their tutor base. Staff will be on hand to support. Funnels will have clear barriers, signage and socially distanced markers.

Q// Can pupils wear face masks inside the academy building?

The Academy Transformation Trust is very clear on their position with regard to face coverings.

- Whilst it is not compulsory, all staff and students are encouraged to wear masks or face coverings in corridors, canteens and other indoor, communal areas. Students will not be allowed to wear face masks/coverings in lessons.
- Masks should not be worn outside whilst on school grounds.
- Face coverings must be appropriate in design. Where this is not the case, an alternative will be provided for that day only. The Principal will decide what is and is not appropriate in each academy.
- All students are recommended to carry face coverings as they will need to wear them on transport and in any shops they visit on the way to and from the academy.
- All students will be given a tutorial on the safe use of face coverings on their first day at the academy and should have a sealed plastic bag in which they can safely and hygienically store them after correctly folding them when not wearing them outside or during lessons, as stipulated within the updated guidance.
- Please note that students may wish to or have to wear face coverings on their journey to the academy depending on their mode of transport.

Q// Will students have tutor time?

Yes, students will meet their tutor each morning in their tutor base within their bubble. This is a vital aspect of the pastoral and well-being support that we will give to each student.

Q// How is the academy ensuring that bubbles do not mix during the day?

Each bubble has its own classrooms, floors and toilets. It also has its own social areas for break and lunch. These will have barriers to clearly display where bubble boundaries are. Each bubble has its own canteen servery and eating locations.

Q// Will pupils have the full curriculum?

Yes. Pupils will have a normal timetable although teaching will not happen in specialist rooms at all times. Staff will cross bubbles to deliver the curriculum as required.

Q// How is the academy set up to meet government guidelines on hygiene and cleaning?

Each bubble floor will operate a one way system. There are sanitation stations at the entrance to each classroom and pupils will be expected to use them as they enter a different room. Teachers will teach in a 2 metre exclusion zone and tables/chairs are set up facing the front of the room. Government guidance is clear that pupils can sit together at desks, but cannot sit facing one another. Each desk will have wipes and tissues with lidded bins to catch, kill and bin germs. Teachers will never cross their teaching zone areas at the front of the classroom.

Q// What are the hygiene routines to reduce risk?

The guidelines are clear that we are to ensure that there is regular hand sanitisation/washing, regular touch point cleaning and a commitment to kill germs using the “*catch it, kill it and bin it*” routine. Other than this it is to ensure students are facing forwards and that they socially distance wherever possible.

Q// What about cleaning?

In each bubble we have spot cleaning throughout the day on bubble touch points.

Q// How will we be assured that pupils will be sensible and follow safety recommendations?

In these situations we are responsible for looking after each other. On arrival pupils will receive a safety briefing including training on removal and the safe stowing of coverings. It will be explained to students that they have a responsibility to meet these arrangements for the safety of the whole community. If pupils do breach them out of conscious poor choices they will be removed from bubble circulation and parents will be informed. Staff will be on hand in each corridor to support pupils with their own safety and that of others. Pupils will be instructed not to touch each other, breathe over each other, share equipment or breach the bubbles. In moving around the corridor they will follow the one way system and will be instructed to remain socially distanced. We recommend that students wear face coverings in corridors and indoor communal areas although these must be removed in classrooms and when outside. Please support us by stressing to your child the importance of adhering to these safety principles for the benefit of everyone in our community.

Q// What about catering?

We are unable to run Breakfast Club for the time being. We are sad about this and can't wait to get it back into service when we can. Break times and lunch times will take place at normal times in bubble locations. The servery is available for pupils to buy food. Chartwells, our caterers, are happy to take money at the cash desks or for students to use credit which has been charged on-line by parents as normal.

Pupils will not be able to use the fingerprint card machines in school to charge their cards for the time-being. It is fine for pupils to bring packed lunches.

Q// Do pupils need to wear full uniform?

Yes – there is no greater risk to students wearing full uniform and government guidelines state that uniform does not have to be washed each day or any more than it usually would be. The government have also stated that all schools return to their usual uniform policies as this plays a valuable role in contributing to the ethos of an academy and setting an appropriate tone.

Q// What equipment does my child need?

Your child does not need any further equipment than normal other than they will need to carry a face mask. The Academy Transformation Trust will provide each child with their own pencil case which will be loaded with a pen, pencil, ruler, eraser and highlighter pen. Please be reminded that students cannot share equipment in school

and we will not be able to provide beyond the equipment students receive on the first day. As normal, students will need their own scientific calculator, which can be purchased from [argos](#) or [amazon](#).

Q// Can pupils wear PE kit instead of uniform on days they have PE?

No – we do not want students sitting in potentially wet, muddy and sweaty PE kit all day long. We feel that this is unhygienic and unacceptable especially as we enter the winter season. This potentially could lead to illness.

Q// What will pupils do in PE and what will they wear?

The PE curriculum will be non-contact activities with any equipment being used being wiped and cleaned after use. Students will need to wear normal TQEA PE kit to undertake practical activities.

Q// How will the academy ensure that the changing rooms are clean for each bubble?

The changing rooms will have socially distanced markers and guidance. We recommend that students wear face coverings as they are getting changed. We have organised spot cleaning of the changing rooms after each bubble has used it. We have sprays which are highly effective at ensuring that germs cannot live in that environment for a number of hours. Our risk assessors are clear that what we are doing meets safety requirements and ensures PE stays on the curriculum, which will please many students!!!

Q// What will happen if my child becomes ill during the day?

We have bubble medical rooms for this purpose. If pupils exhibit co-vid symptoms they will be isolated, supported by staff wearing PPE and parents will be called to collect their child immediately. It is important that you arrange a test for your child as soon as possible. Results are available in 24 hours.

Q// How will the academy day end?

At 3:05 pm the Y8 bubble will be released from classrooms. As soon as this happens Y9/11 will be released followed by Y7/10. We estimate that this release may add 5-10 mins to the day. On leaving we recommend that students wear their masks as they leave bubbles.

Q// What will happen with the buses?

Warwickshire Education Authority have informed us that the following buses will be renamed and will operate just for TQEA pupils. Extra capacity buses will be in service to ensure that the service copes with the number of students that wish to travel.

At present we know: -

The 766 bus that operates to and from Baddesley Ensor will now be renamed the **966** and operated by South Staffs.

The 731 bus that operates to Ansley via Galley Common, Gun Hill and Old Arley will be renamed **731C**.

We are still awaiting more information about bus services and will let you know as soon as we have it. Please be advised that all pupils must wear face coverings on the bus.

Q// What will happen if my child has to go to the inclusion room or stay for a same day detention?

This will not affect your child if they adhere to the behaviour policy in the academy. However, in the event of your child going to the inclusion room or being given a same day detention they will serve these within their bubbles. Please be reminded that detention notification can be found on the Class Charts app and you should have received your log in before the summer holiday. Please inform us if you have any problems using the Class Charts app.

Q// Can parents come on site during the academy day?

In controlled circumstances, with an appointment, parents may be able to visit a member of staff for a meeting on the academy site. However, for most communications we are advised that it is better to call us or e-mail us at the moment to ensure that we reduce the numbers of people on site. Please be assured that we will get back to you within reasonable time.

Q// What happens if TQEA has a confirmed case of co-vid?

Of course, no one wants this to happen, but we need to be clear about what happens if this occurs. At that moment the academy will contact the Trust team and Public Health England. Public Health England will advise the academy to inform the appropriate parents who have been in close contact with the individual. Pupils who have been in close contact will be sent home to isolate and take a test. In the case of two or more confirmed cases it is likely that the whole bubble will be expected to isolate and take a test. It is expected that in this case the bubble will be closed down and deep cleaning will take place for 72 hours. In these situations the appropriate government authorities will take control of the situation and the academy will follow their advice stringently.

Q// Where are the academy risk assessments?

The academy risk assessments are on the school website on our co-vid page. Please contact us with any further questions and we will update you with any further developments or changes including updates on school transport.