

## End of term newsletter – July 2020

### Dear Parent/carer

Little did I know that my first end of year newsletter would entail recounting events that have occurred, during a global pandemic, but here we are. At the end of this week, students and staff depart for the summer holidays. We went into partial lockdown on Friday 20 March and at the time I genuinely thought we would be away from the academy for two weeks. I, like many others, underestimated what we were facing. I would like to take some time to look back at some of the highlights during what has been, a very challenging time for everyone.

We continued to open the academy to a relatively small number of students from 23 March. I am very proud that we have provided continued provision for students who came into the academy to do some work, maintain a social network and have, as a result, made some new friends, which has been lovely to see. It was really important that we continued the provision through the Easter and May holidays and on Bank Holidays. From June 15 we were able to open up to Y10 students and it has been amazing to have them back in the building, albeit in very different circumstances. The uptake for Y10 provision has been really positive and I would like to thank families for their support with this.

We have been able to support families with food parcel deliveries for 10 weeks, delivering twice a week to an average of 38 families. We have had contributions from local businesses, the public, families of students and from staff. I am very grateful to all those who have supported our food bank. It has made a significant difference to the students and families.

The Government set up a Free School Meal voucher system which has enabled us to continue providing parents/carers with their entitlement whilst the academy has been closed. Thank you to all who have worked with us, providing an email address to ensure vouchers could be sent out. I am delighted that the Government changed their position to allow the vouchers to be given out over the summer break. Vouchers for the summer break will be sent out to all parents/carers on Monday 20 March.

The use of technology in education has become such an important tool over the last few months. We have used technology to set work for students through Google Classroom, teach online lessons to groups of students, to deliver training to staff, gather information from parents through completion of Google forms, liaise with partner agencies and have recruited staff. All of the aforementioned has happened to ensure we can hit the ground running in September when we return. Thank you for engaging in these processes with us, it has made a significant difference in allowing us to be as ready as we can be in September.

I will now turn your attention to **September**. All of the information I am going to share with you is based on the current Government Guidance. If there are any changes to the guidance over the summer, we will update our plans on the academy website. Click on the [green button](#) for the latest information on September reopening.

It is very important that we adhere to the guidance in protecting both students and staff. To that end, can I ask that from September you:

VAT number: 158 2720 04. Outwood Grange Academies Trust is an exempt charity.

A list of Directors' names is open to inspection at our registered office.

## **DO NOT SEND YOUR CHILD IN if they are showing any symptoms including:-**

- **Has a new continuous cough or high temperature**
- **Has a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell.**

You must ensure you keep your child at home, self-isolate and get a test. Other members of their household (including siblings) should self-isolate for 14 days from when the symptomatic person first had symptoms. **Parents/carers must inform us immediately of the results of a test.**

For further clarity please visit the websites below:-

- [COVID-19: guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection](#)
- [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): getting tested - GOV.UK](#)

If your child tests **negative**, if they feel well and no longer have symptoms similar to coronavirus (COVID-19), they can stop self-isolating. If they have another virus, such as a cold or flu, it is still best to avoid contact with other people until they are better. Other members of their household can stop self-isolating.

If your child tests **positive**, they should follow the 'stay at home: [COVID-19: guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection](#)' and must continue to self-isolate for at least 7 days from the onset of their symptoms and then return to school **only** if they **do not** have symptoms. If they still have a high temperature, they should keep self-isolating until their temperature returns to normal. Other members of their household should continue self-isolating for the full 14 days.

In response to government guidance on maintaining social distancing and avoiding unnecessary large gatherings of our young people, each morning there will be a slightly staggered start to the day to ensure students are on site safely and sensibly and can start each day with hygiene routines. Students should not gather together en-route and should enter straight into the Academy via their designated route, which can be found on the Academy Map (see below).

Please visit the [academy website](#) to find the latest information regarding our September reopening, including our comprehensive risk assessment.

### **Year 7**

**Year 7 ONLY** will return to the academy on **Wednesday 2 September**, to be on site for **8:20 am**. Please ensure your child arrives on time, using the entrance marked on the Academy Map (see below) and make their way to the **theatre**. From **Thursday 3 September**, year 7 students will then attend the academy at **8.00am**

### **Years 8, 9, 10 & 11**

Year groups **8, 9, 10 & 11** will return to the academy on **Thursday 3 September** following the staggered start times below. Students **must** arrive on site at the following times and using the entrances marked on the Academy Map below:-

**Y8 - 8:05 am**

**Y9 - 8:10 am**

**Y10 - 8:15 am**

**Y11 - 8:20 am**



## Classrooms

All classrooms in the academy have been remodelled to ensure students are sat side by side and are facing the front. A 2m box has been marked out in each classroom to ensure that students and staff are kept at the distance advised in the latest Government guidance.

Students will be expected to adhere to the rules, which will be slightly different from September, given the current guidance around keeping students in year group bubbles. Further guidance around an addendum to the Behaviour Policy will be shared in due course.

## Transport

Due to the above staggered starts, it may be that your child needs to catch an earlier bus than usual. I would encourage you to check the bus timetables and ensure journeys are planned in advance. A link to the Stagecoach bus timetables is given below:

[Teesside Service Updates - Find Out If Your Bus Is Running](#)

Please be reminded that under current guidance it is mandatory for everyone to wear face coverings when accessing public transport. These **will not** be provided by school so it is important that you source these yourself before September. There will be stations located within the school grounds where students can safely dispose of or store their face coverings.

Please ensure you remind your child of the importance of social distancing whilst walking to school or when queueing at bus stops. We would encourage students to walk or cycle to school wherever possible.

## **Breakfast & Lunch**

You may recall Acklam is now a cashless school. All students must have an account including those students who are eligible for free school meals. Using the following [link](#), please follow the instructions and register your child.

Students will be able to access breakfast upon entry to the academy in their 'year group bubbles'. Breakfast items will be available from the time each year group is set to arrive each day, for example, from 8.00am for Y7 students, 8.05am for Y8 students etc...

We will be offering a reduced lunch menu over the first few weeks in September. This is to reduce queuing and ensure all students can access either a cold or hot lunch in a timely fashion. Following current guidance, our dining hall has been restructured to ensure students sit side by side and facing one way only.

## **Other items, including ties/planners/school trips etc.;**

Paying for items using cash is no longer available at Acklam. Students **must** have an **ipay** account for such items.

## **Uniform**

If you have not already done so, please ensure you order your uniform directly through Trutex. Please familiarise yourself with the [uniform section](#) of our website.

A gentle reminder that:

- All shoes must be **PLAIN, BLACK and POLISHABLE**.
- Any piercings/false nails/false eyelashes/excessive makeup will be asked to be **removed** for the first day we return.

## **Stationary**

Given the current guidance, we are encouraging all parents/carers to purchase a stationary set for students returning in September. This will ensure your child has all they need for each lesson. Essential items include: Pen, Pencil, Ruler, Eraser, Protractor & Calculator.

## **Water bottle**

We have installed new water drinking stations in the academy, which students are able to use. We have made them 'COVID safe' and will issue guidance to students on a regular basis. To that end, I would encourage you to purchase a reusable sports bottle, which can be filled in the morning before students set off from home, and can then be topped up throughout the day.

## Visiting the academy

You are normally welcome to visit the academy at any time, however, due to the strict guidance to minimize visitors to schools whilst we are in this recovery period from COVID-19, may I ask that you only attend school **by appointment only**. Please contact reception on 01642 818200 to make an appointment or alternatively email [enquiries@acklam.outwood.com](mailto:enquiries@acklam.outwood.com).

## Academy student newsletter

A fantastic summer student newsletter has been created by Miss Delaney which showcases some of the things that have been going on over the last few months. It also has a variety of fun activities and games for students to complete over the summer break, including an exciting reading list. Thank you Miss Delaney for this excellent publication. Following the link [here](#) to access the newsletter.

## Final thoughts....

The new term will feel different to everyone, but rest assured that with the plans we have, teamed with the exceptional staff we have at Acklam, all students will feel safe, happy and fully supported each and every day. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your support during what has been a challenging time. Together, we will continue to put students first, raise standards and transform their lives.

Have a safe and wonderful summer break.

Yours sincerely,



Mr Mark Gray  
**Associate Principal**