

Our Ref: GDZ/MMC

21st July 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

This year has been difficult in the extreme...in some ways, it has been the most memorable year of our lives and yet in others it has been one of the most challenging. I understand how hard this has been for our students, families and our staff and it's sad that some of our students won't get to say goodbye to their friends and the staff who have worked with them during the year. It is also sad that our Year 8 students did not get their proper graduation celebrations and our Year 11 students did not get to go to the prom. That said, Outwood Academy Portland is a special place because of our community spirit and our ability to lean on each other in challenging times such as the challenges brought on by COVID-19.

As the academic year comes to an end this Friday (24th July 2020), I am truly grateful for all the efforts that have gone into the last few months around remote learning, and we have been supporting our children wherever we can. I am humbled by what you have done at home to support our students and we look forward to being together again in September.

The academy has remained open throughout the pandemic, providing an essential childcare service for children of key workers and provisions for our most vulnerable students. In addition to this, we have also been delivering face to face academic sessions and pastoral support for students in Year 10 since 15th June. Further, we have also provided targeted bespoke support for students in Years 7, 8 and 9.

Even though our new Year 7 students will not be able to take part in the usual (and exciting) transition programme that was planned for them, they have participated in a similarly exciting virtual transition programme. Years 10 and 11 students have also gained life changing qualifications and we also celebrated the achievements of our hardworking students through the virtual student voice awards. Once again, congratulations to all the students who were nominated for the awards and especially the students who won awards on the night.

During the period of the school closure, we have kept in contact with our most vulnerable students and their families. This contact includes weekly phone calls, home visits and in some cases, targeted intervention in the academy. Also, in line with Government guidelines to provide laptops and routers for our most vulnerable students, we have been able to support our most vulnerable students with laptops and routers to enable them access the online learning that is provided.

The Government published guidance for the full reopening of schools in the Autumn term on 2nd July and the guidance sets out more details on how the Department of Education expects schools to operate in the autumn term. We fully support the announcement and we are excited that all students will be coming back into the Academy in September since we believe that school is a vital part of the development of young people and supporting their life chances.

Outwood Grange Academies Trust, a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales with company number 06995649.

Registered office address: Potovens Lane, Outwood, Wakefield, West Yorkshire WF1 2PF.

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.

We are currently completing a comprehensive risk assessment in order to meet the expectations of the guidance and we will always put the safety of students and staff at the heart of our preparations. We will keep you updated with our preparations on our social media platform and the 'Reopening' tab on the Academy website.

September Return Dates

Tuesday 1st September – Staff INSET day

Wednesday 2nd September – Year 7 students only

Thursday 3rd September – Academy opens to all year groups

Attendance to the Academy from September 2020

The Government has stated that school attendance will be mandatory again from the beginning of the autumn term (1st September 2020). This means that from 1st September, the usual rules on school attendance will apply, including:

- parents have a duty to ensure that their child attends regularly at school where the child is a registered pupil at school and they are of compulsory school age;
- schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence
- the availability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices in line with local authorities' codes of conduct

All students are therefore expected to return to the Academy in September with the exception of those who will still be unable to attend in line with public health advice because they are self-isolating and have had symptoms or a positive test result themselves; or because they are a close contact of someone who has coronavirus (COVID-19).

Students with COVID-19 Symptoms

The current government guidance states that if your child is unwell with COVID-19 symptoms, then keep them at home and they should not attend the academy. You will also need to follow the [COVID-19: guidance for households with possible coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection guidance](#)

The current Government guidance also states that if anyone in an education or childcare setting becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature, or has a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia), they must be sent home and advised to follow the COVID-19: guidance for households with possible coronavirus (COVID-19) infection guidance. In view of this if a student is unwell in the Academy and they show symptoms of coronavirus, they will be isolated in a dedicated room and parents will be asked to collect them. Your child will then need to isolate for 7 days in line with Government guidance. Parents will be expected to follow the COVID-19 guidance for households above. We will encourage you to get your child tested as soon as possible.

If the COVID-19 test in this case is negative, your child can return to the Academy and join their allocated group.

If the test is positive, the rest of your child's group and the staff who have been working closely with the group may be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 14 days.

Bubbles and Zones

We are committed to delivering an ambitious, broad and balanced curriculum, with controls which mitigate transmission risks. The school is organised into year group bubbles, where whilst in school students will only come into contact with students in their own year group. Each bubble has been designated a zone within the school where they will receive the majority of their lessons, supplemented by controlled movement when classes access more specialised areas such as science, IT, Art, Music and PE. Staff will move around the zones to teach specific subjects, minimising student movements and the risk of transmission.

Learning managers and inclusion specialists are also based within each of these zones to provide support for students within each of the bubbles.

Curriculum

Whilst over the past 4 months we have endeavoured to deliver an online remote learning platform, we recognise it will never have the impact of students working directly with teachers in the classroom. Our subject directors are working in tandem with heads of department to develop schemes of work and high quality lessons that will rapidly fill gaps in learning, and re-engage students as they return to the classroom. This with our Praising Stars system will enable us to identify personal needs and intervene quickly and effectively. Students should not be adversely affected academically by this pandemic and we will ensure they are not disadvantaged by the time they have missed in school.

Staggered Timings

We have introduced staggered start times for the Academy day. At the end of the day, students will be dismissed in year groups.

Year group	Arrival time	Arrival venue	Lessons start	End of the normal school day
7	8:00	Dining room	8:25	14:30
8	8:05	Back of DT	8:25	14:30
9	8:10	Tennis Court	8:25	14:30
10	8:15	Piazza	8:25	14:30
11	8:20	Back of the Gym	8:25	14:30

It is important that students arrive as close to the arrival time as possible, to ensure they are punctual for lessons, but also to restrict contact with other bubbles and prioritise safe distancing.

Students will also use dedicated entrances for each year group.

Catering Availability

Breakfast will not be served in the morning from 8am for all students. However, food will be available at break time and lunchtime.

We would recommend that, where possible, students initially bring a packed lunch, where this is not possible, students will still be able to buy food from the kitchen using their sQuid account. We will also continue to deliver free-school-meals entitlements.

There will be a range of items available, although there will be an amended menu. Find below examples of items that will be served.

Break time - Bacon/sausage cobs, toast, croissants, vegetarian sausage rolls.
 Lunchtime - Hot paninis, hot toasties, pasta/jacket potatoes (alternating), fish and chips (Fridays) and a selection of wraps and sandwiches.

Staggered Breaks and Lunch Times

Break and lunch times are also staggered so that no more than one-year group is accessing a space at any one time. To make this feasible we have created an additional dining room.

The diagram below provides an insight into the updated format the academy day.

	P1 (8.25-9.25)	P2 (9.25-10.40)			Tutor 10.40-11.00	P3 (11.00-12.00)	P4 (12.00-13.30) Lunch			P5 (13.30-14.30)	Enrichment ? (14.30 >>)
Y7	60 mins	30 min	Break - DH 15 min (9.55-10.10)	30 min	Tutor	60 mins	30 mins	Lunch- DH	30 mins	60 mins	
Y8	60 mins	Break - DH 15 min (9.25-9.40)	60 Min			Tutor	60 mins	Lunch- DH	60 mins	60 mins	
Y9	60 mins	Break - GYM 15 min (9.25-9.40)	60 Min			Tutor	60 mins	Lunch- Gym	60 mins	60 mins	
Y10	60 mins	60 Min		Break - DH 15 min (10.25-10.40)	Tutor	60 mins	60 mins	Lunch- Gym	60 mins		
Y11	60 mins	60 Min		Break - GYM 15 min (10.25-10.40)	Tutor	60 mins	60 mins	Lunch- Gym	60 mins		

Cashless Systems

The Academy went cashless on 1st July, 2020 and currently uses an online payment system 'Ipay', for trips and any additional payments that may be needed whilst your child is in the academy. The details for students to access the 'Ipay' system were posted to all students in June. If you have any issues with your account, visit <https://www.ipayimpact.co.uk> or contact the Academy.

However, the Academy uses the sQuid payment system for food and drinks. Students are expected to make payments using their online sQuid accounts. If you have any issues with your sQuid account, use this link; <https://portal.squidcard.com/LoginPortal/>

We are a fully cashless school so students never have to worry about carrying cash.

Tutor Group (TG)

In September, our tutor groups will change so that all students in each tutor group will be from the same year group. This will enable us to maintain the year group bubble and deliver age appropriate and targeted pastoral support.

Enrichment

All enrichment activities will take place in year group bubbles.

Behaviour

Our behaviour system is built upon three key principles, being respectful, being responsible and being safe. This has never been more prevalent than in our current circumstances.

We always have very high expectations of our students and we will be very clear in our expectations such as; adhering to social distancing, hygiene controls, movement around the academy, attitudes to learning and respecting safe practice for themselves, their peers and adults. We appreciate your support in relaying these expectations from home and the importance of positive behaviour at all times.

Travelling on the Academy Bus to the Academy

If your child travels to the Academy by bus, we have worked with the transport companies to ensure that social distancing is maintained on the buses in accordance with Government guidelines. The buses will be collecting students in year groups in line with the bubbles in the academy and will travel in a convoy. Please ask your child to arrive at the designated bus stop promptly and wait patiently to be collected. The designated bus stops and bus times will be published on the Academy website and social media platforms in August.

In line with Government guidance on face coverings on public transport, all students will be expected to wear face coverings on the school bus. We have provided dedicated bins for students to safely dispose of any disposable face coverings when they arrive in the academy.

Leaving the Academy

Exits for each year group are the same as the year group entrance.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Current government guidance states that wearing a face covering or face mask in schools or other education settings is not recommended. In light of this, the Academy will not require staff or students to wear face coverings. However, if students bring any disposable PPE into the Academy, special bins will be provided to ensure they are disposed of safely.

Local Lockdowns and Self-isolation

Should there be a future spike in local COVID-19 cases we will work with the Local Authority and Public Health England in taking action quickly, and we have systems in place to deliver immediate remote education provision for any students unable to access the Academy.

Social Distancing and Other Safety Measures Around the Academy

Based on a comprehensive risk assessment that we have conducted, the following measures have also been put in place to maintain social distancing and to reduce the risk of infection:

- Classrooms rearranged in line with Government social distancing guidelines
- Routes set out for students to move around the Academy
- Different groups of students using different designated entrances and exits
- Different groups of students using designated toilets
- Markings outside and inside the building to ensure students are maintaining appropriate distances
- Hand sanitisers are located in many areas around the Academy and at the entrances and exits
- Tissues in every classroom
- Students will use the same suite of classrooms the majority of the time they are in the Academy and there will be limited movement between classrooms

- Students will stay in the same year group or 'bubble'
- More frequent cleaning of surfaces and key areas around the Academy

To ensure a successful start to the academic year, please read the following information to ensure you and your child are reminded of our expectations from September.

Uniform

All students are required to wear the full Academy uniform. The Academy uniform should not be altered in any way, for example by adding clips, badges or stickers. Skirts must not be adapted; this includes folding them over at the top or wearing a bobble in them. Trousers must not be "taken in" to reduce the width of the leg. Girl's tights must be a minimum of 40 denier. Blazer sleeves must not be rolled up. Please do not purchase non-Outwood uniform and have logos sewn onto it. If students are seen with these items they will be asked to change into our loan uniform. **School shoes must be plain black, no trainers, no Vans, no Converse, no boots, no pumps or canvas shoes. Shoes should be of a material that can be polished.** Students will not be reminded of our uniform policy and will be issued with an SLT detention if it is not adhered to at all times. **To order extra items of uniform please go to www.trutex.com or contact the Trutex Direct customer service team by telephone on 01200 421206 The LEA code required to place orders for Outwood Academy Portland is LEA00640SC.** Please ensure you have ordered the correct uniform in good time for September 2020.

Hairstyles, Makeup and Nails

Hair styles should be sensible and colours should be natural. No student will be allowed into lessons with unnatural hair colour. No offensive patterns should be shaved into hairstyles. Hair accessories should be discreet and must be black or purple, no scarves or bandanas (unless for religious reasons). Hair bobbles must not be worn on the wrist. If in doubt, please contact the Learning Manager. Noticeable makeup is not allowed and any makeup worn must be very discreet. The decision to what qualifies as discreet rests with the Principal. False eyelashes are not to be worn. Nail polish and any type of false nails (including clear gels, acrylics, extensions, Shellac etc. are not allowed.

Jewellery and Smart Watches

No jewellery is allowed except a wrist watch and a medic alert necklace or bracelet. Smart watches are not allowed in the Academy. If a student is thinking about having their ears pierced, or any other piercing, this should be done at the start of the summer holidays, as no student will be allowed to wear earrings or any other jewellery at any time.

Mobile Phones

Mobile phones are not permitted to be used on the Academy premises and should one be brought to school must be turned off and placed in the bottom of the student's bag.

Holidays

Please do not remove your child from their education for the purpose of holiday. If you do, we will formally request the Local Authority to serve you with a Fixed Penalty Notice. Fixed Penalties require each parent to pay a fine of £60 (per child, per week) if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. Failure to pay within the specified timescale will result in a summons to appear before the magistrate's court. We do not authorise holidays in term time. There are only 190 school days per year, leaving 175 days for family gatherings, holidays, days out etc.

Punctuality

Students are expected to be at the Academy at their allocated start time every day. If students arrive after their start time they will be issued with a detention. If your child has a medical appointment at the start of the school day, please ask for an appointment card. If no card is produced when a student arrives late at the Academy, a late detention will be issued.

Communication

We welcome your communication with us through the 'contact us' button on the website so that we can work together transitioning students back into the Academy. We may contact you over the course of the summer break as we continue to gain vital information that will support your child. Please continue to follow the Academy on social media via Twitter and updates on our website.

We have an opportunity in September to take positive steps to make the most out of these challenging times by rebuilding the wellbeing and education of our resilient and amazing young people. We know that our students have been affected by the pandemic in different ways, however, we will continue to work with you to ensure that our students come out of this tougher and better than ever.

As we enter this pivotal phase of rebuilding our young people, we are more committed than ever to ensure all our students become well rounded individuals with a positive attitude to learning and to life, where they are ready to take on the challenges of our fast-changing world and to make a creative contribution to our own community.

Finally, I would like to thank you in anticipation of your continuous support and look forward to a successful academic year.

May I take this opportunity to wish both parents and students a most enjoyable summer; please stay safe, and we look forward to working with you all next term.

Yours sincerely



Mr G Dzoboku
Principal