



17/07/20

Dear Parent / Carer

Re: End of term letter

As this academic year draws to a close we would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to you, our community for your on-going support. To identify that this has been a challenging past term for all concerned is an understatement!

Reassuringly, our learners have been a credit to our school, they have quickly and successfully adapted to the distance learning programme. We have sought to reward their hard work and determination through the many prizes and commendations we have issued throughout lock down. Yet again, it has been wonderful to see that so many of our learners have been recognised for their excellent efforts at our annual presentation evening.

It is with great pleasure to confirm that whilst we have endured a year tinged with a degree of uncertainty there have been many highlights:

- 3,000 virtual lessons delivered
- £500 raised for Birmingham Children's Hospital
- 1,000 visors developed and made at Beacon Hill Academy for Key Workers
- 600 PPE goggles donated to the NHS
- 120 laptops loaned out
- 228,560 questions answered on Hegarty Maths
- 20,000 GCSE Pods streamed
- 324,271 Century AI nuggets completed
- 238 one to one meetings with KS4 learners

It is important to note that the aforementioned achievements have only been possible through the hard work, dedication and commitment of our staff. I would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank them for this.

Following the government guidance issued to all schools in June we have worked hard with our Trust to ready the academy for September 2020. We have diligently put in place a range of measures which will help facilitate the safe return of all of our learners. Whilst we appreciate that you may be anxious about the return, please be assured the measures outlined below will help to mitigate against any potential risks associated with COVID-19. While it would be impossible to create a totally risk free environment, I would like to reassure you that everything that can be possibly done to minimise risk is being done. Please see below further details on the key measures we have outlined:



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School timings and 'bubbles'

In welcoming all learners back in September, we will seek to minimise the contact that learners have in the school day with their peers - thereby help reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19. This will be in part achieved through keeping year groups separate by placing learners in to what has been commonly termed year group 'bubbles.' Scientific evidence suggests that by placing learners into consistent groups reduces the risk of transmission by limiting the extent of contact with others. We are pleased to confirm that all learners will be studying their full curriculum from September. They will however remain within the same area of the school throughout the day for the vast majority of their sessions and within their 'year group zone.' Learning Managers will be relocated to these newly appointed areas to ensure that they remain close points of contact for their year group – they will be able to quickly and efficiently assist with any academic or pastoral matters.

The aforementioned zoning extends to social times, meaning that specific year groups will have designated areas of the school which they can access at break and lunch. Critically, social times will also be staggered to ensure that year groups remain apart. In addition to this, year groups have each been allocated their own dedicated toilet facilities. The details concerning areas of zoning are accessible via our website.

Each year group will follow a different timetable for each day – learners will receive this on their first day back. It is important to note that this will include staggered start and finish times. There are specific points of entry and exit to our site earmarked for specific year groups. It is essential that learners adhere to their allocated entrance and exits. To assist in this process learners will be supervised by Senior Members of Staff and Learning Managers. It is imperative that we stress the importance of learners only arriving to school at their designated time – this is important as it will help us to mitigate against learners coming into contact with other year groups and congregating. **As a result, there will be no additional 'support/care' provision available before and after school during the length of the aforementioned measures.**

Once learners arrive to school they need to go straight to their period 1 lesson. Learners need to be in their first lesson no later than 10 minutes after the time they have been directed to enter our site. During your conversations with your child please stress the importance of this. It is imperative that learners understand that they cannot undertake patterns of behaviour which they may have previously been accustomed to. They can no longer walk around the academy site and mix with other year groups. **They must go directly to their teaching rooms.**

In the interests of safety and in line with government advice we would politely remind our parents/carers that learners who travel via taxi or public transport must wear a face mask for the duration of that journey. We ask for your support in reaffirming and ensuring your child makes their way to school as safely as possible. This means they must avoid congregating in large groups to walk to and from the site and ensure that they travel straight home after school. **Further details on many of the above points will be available in a VODCAST, due to be released during later part of August. This will include a detailed risk assessment which will be available via the academy website.**



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Please see the details below of how and when learners should return on the week commencing 1st September 2020. We will confirm the timings of this in our August update.

Date	Detail
01/09/20 (Tue)	Inset Day for staff in their academy
02/09/20 (Wed)	Year 11 Induction
03/09/20 (Thurs)	Year 7 Induction
04/09/20 (Fri)	Year 10 Induction
07/09/20 (Mon)	Year 9 Induction
08/09/20 (Tue)	Year 8 Induction

Health, well-being and tutor time

- Upon entering and exiting classrooms, learners will be required to hand sanitize. Any learners who assist in administrative tasks, such as the distribution of books will be required to hand sanitize before and after the procedure. Hand sanitizing stations will be available in other designated parts of the school.
- Learners to adopt good respiratory hygiene: catch it, bin it, kill it.
- Where possible, learners and staff are to keep a 2-metre distance from each other. Learners do not attend school if someone in the household has a confirmed case of COVID 19 or is showing symptoms.
- It is imperative that parents/carers are contactable at all times. Should a learner present as unwell, they will be separated from the main body of learners and supervised in a separate area of the academy while you are contacted. For the safety of others and to aid the smooth running of the academy during this testing time, it is imperative that the learner is collected immediately. The school will engage promptly and fully with NHS track and trace.
- A rigorous cleaning regime will be in operation throughout the academy day to ensure a near continuous cycle of sanitization and cleaning.
- From September tutor time will take place at the end of each day. This is important to enabling us to 'check in' with our learners before they leave school – ensuring that they are ready and equipped for the next day. We believe this will enable us to better safeguard learners' emotional wellbeing in what is set to be a period of change as formal schooling resumes.

Attendance

- The government advice states that all learners must return to school in the autumn term.
- It is important to note that shielding advice for all learners currently ends on the 1st August 2020 and is subject to a review.
- Beacon Hill Academy expects all learners to return in September and will be operating our usual attendance policy. The attendance officer must be informed if a learner is self-isolating or has symptoms of COVID-19. Please use the absence line to inform us of this.



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Equipment

- Learners should bring a rucksack/backpack big enough to carry their planners, home learning, stationary equipment, lunch and water requirements for the day. Exercise books are to remain in school. School bags to be placed under desks during lessons.
- Stationary equipment should be a planner; black pen; pencil; ruler; rubber; Casio FX83GTPLUS or FX-85GTPLUS scientific calculator; red and green pen. Learners may choose to bring highlighters and a maths sets.
- Additional equipment which learners should aim to bring: small bottle of hand sanitiser for break and lunch use; a pack of tissues and a small disposable bag to place used tissues in.
- Please note you can also find equipment requirements outlined in the Parent/Carer Guide 2020, found under the parent tab of the academy website.

Catering provision

- As of September the school will not be providing any food or drink at break time however, learners are able to bring in their own snacks and drinks (none - fizzy) which they will be allowed to consume during social time.
- Food provision will continue at lunchtime for all learners that require it. It is important to note that the menu is streamlined.
- Learners who are in Year 7 in September should bring their own packed lunch where possible, if Year 7 learners wish to purchase a meal or are entitled to free school meals they will need to ensure that this is pre-ordered using our online meal booking system. Details on how to use this system will be provided at a later date.
- Learners will not be allowed to use water fountains. To minimise the risk of cross-contamination, water obtained directly from the school will only be available in the event of an emergency or unless the administration of medication dictates this is necessary. **It is therefore vital that learners bring sufficient water to last them the length of the school day.**

Uniform

- As per government guidance, we feel it is important that learners start the new academic year in their full uniform.
- Full school uniform must be worn at all times – **no exceptions**. The school uniform code clearly states the requirements of Beacon Hill Academy. **We ask for your support in ensuring that uniform expectations are upheld and that learners do not contravene these stipulations.**
- On the day(s) your child has PE they should attend school in their full PE kit. This will negate the need for learners to use changing rooms and again mitigates the risk of any cross contamination between year groups.
- Learners are to wear formal, smart, black leather or patent shoes. Learners are not permitted to wear trainers unless on a day they have PE – this can only be with corresponding full PE kit. Learners are not permitted to wear as school shoes, black leather trainers including those without markings. School shoes should have no visible branding (whether the branding is a different colour or black) including Nike 'ticks' or sporting logos. If the learner chooses to wear black ballet pumps, these should be plain black without any accessories, such as studs.



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Boots are not acceptable (a boot is defined as anything that touches or comes above the ankle bone).

- Jewellery is limited to one small ring of religious significance; one small plain metal stud in each ear lobe; no facial piercings are permitted e.g. nose studs. Stretcher style piercings are not permitted in any circumstances. Jewellery cannot be worn during PE lessons. If jewellery is worn for medical reasons, suitable medical evidence identifying the reasons for this must be provided to the school.
- Hair accessories such as bows, flowers and wide bands are not permitted, thin 'Alice bands' may be worn. Only natural hair dyes are permitted. Hair should be not shorter than grade 1 and no design lines/patterns are allowed. Plain black headscarf (if worn).
- Learners are not permitted to wear nail varnish and acrylic/false nails must be removed for school.

Values Driven Expectations (VDE) behaviour, technology and mobile phones

- The school will continue to operate the Values Driven Expectation system. We expect the highest standards of our learners, in terms of their attitude to learning; each other; our staff and the pride which they show in wearing the academy's uniform. Any learner who is compromising the health and safety of others in the revised operational environment will be dealt with through a zero-tolerance approach. The safety of our learners, staff and their families is our number one priority.
- Mobile phones/IPADs/IPODs/MP3/4 players and headphones cannot be used at any time on the school site. They will be confiscated if seen. Smart watches may be used but their functionality at school must be limited to reading the time.

What happens if we are subject to a new lockdown?

- We are currently evaluating our home learning plan for implementation from September. Should we find ourselves in a position whereby learners cannot return to school, such as where a local lockdown be imposed, we will aim to continue to follow our school curriculum with as little deviation as possible.

Head Start

- There will be a range of non-compulsory tasks and activities available on Sharepoint for our learners to complete over the summer. This programme is called 'Head Start' and although the learning is optional, we would recommend that learners utilise the work on this platform as part of the process to ready them for September.

Parents/carers

- In order to minimise possible transmission routes, parents/carers are not to attend the academy site unless via a pre-planned appointment. Face-to-face meetings are to be kept to a minimum and where possible totally avoided. It is likely that many issues will be resolved via telephone conversations or potentially through the facilities that Microsoft Teams provides. Arrangements for parent consultation evenings will be provided during the new school year.

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Please be assured that in addition to the measures stated above there are many other processes and operational elements of the academy day that we have taken into consideration. We are conducting, in partnership with our Trust a thorough and dedicated health and safety risk assessment which as previously noted, will be made available to parents and carers in August.

Over the summer holiday, we will continue to monitor the advice and guidance we receive from Public Health England, Dudley MBC and central government, including the Department for Education. Our approach will be informed by this and we will keep you updated through our summer VODCAST and social media channels of any national, regional or local changes which effect the key strategy elements outlined above.

Please see below an additional letter from Jo Higgins, Chief Executive of Dudley Academies Trust, regarding our re-opening.

In the meantime, I would like wish you a happy and healthy summer with your families.

Yours faithfully,

Mr S Dhani
Principal



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17/07/20

Dear Parents and Carers

Re: Planning for the new academic year 2020/21

As we come to the end of the academic year, I want to reassure you that we are working hard on our reopening plans.

As you will agree, we must ensure that all our reopening plans have been thoroughly risk assessed before releasing details. Therefore, an update detailing secondary reopening plans will be released the beginning of August. This will allow for extensive, in depth work to be conducted, to ensure a safe return for all. For now, I will of course provide some key principles to our planning.

- Learners will return by year group from Wednesday 2nd September 2020 as part of their Induction. An overview of the key dates can be seen in the table below.
- Induction will be a key focus. We will support and settle our learners whilst highlighting key safety measures and expectations.
- All learners will be expected to wear full uniform and adhere to our Values Driven Expectations behaviour policy.
- Learner attendance is extremely important to us and unless there are extenuating circumstances, we would expect all learners to attend. We do support our learners and their families therefore, as a Trust we will not issue any fines for non-attendance during the first two weeks of term. This will be reviewed on a regular basis.

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The above is subject to change dependant on our external environment. We will of course monitor this closely and continue to keep you updated.

I am extremely proud of our Trust and I want to thank every member of staff for their hard work and commitment. Staff have shown a real sense of community during these difficult times. From helping learners, each other and the local community, staff across the Trust have demonstrated exceptional levels of dedication.

(continued)

Dudley Academies Trust

Executive offices, Dudley College of Technology
Priory Villa, 3a Ednam Road, Dudley, West
Midlands, DY1 1HL

Chair of Board of Trustees: Lowell Williams

Chief Executive: Jo Higgins



I also want to say a big thank you to our parents and carers for your understanding and support. I am looking forward to the new academic year and welcoming all our learners in September.

I hope you have a restful and safe summer.

Yours faithfully

Jo Higgins
Chief Executive



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