

28 August, 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

I am just contacting you before we return in September with updates and arrangements for the beginning of term. Parents of year 11 students we may still be working with your child for a few weeks to support their transition to their next destination as of lunchtime today we are still awaiting examination results - which were supposed to be released to us yesterday and have not - so please do read this letter as you/your child may need to come in to school at some point.

Latest news re BTEC results – as of 2pm this afternoon, we still do not have all of our BTEC results provided by the board as expected. We hope this will be rectified during the course of the day and over the weekend and we will hopefully have all the BTEC results to share with students on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> September. If we have them, we will share them as soon as we can. I apologise profusely on behalf of the exam board.

School re-opens to staff on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> September and pupils will begin to return full-time from September 7<sup>th</sup>. We will be in contact with you on the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> September to discuss your child's timetable and to confirm their first day. We will also be carrying out Coronavirus risk assessments with all pupils and ask that parents confirm that their child is well and can return to school. We will be keeping a record of children's health on a daily basis should a student present with symptoms and we have to share information with Public Health England. We will also ask you if you have been on holiday – in the UK or abroad – in the last 14 days and take details from you about your trip. This is to ensure we do not have anyone returning to school who should be self-isolating.

The Government have asked us to share with you the latest documentation available to parents – 'what parents need to know' which you can find in the following link:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-in-the-autumn-term> - please read the schools sections.

Our risk assessment which contains all our protective control measures which we will have in place to minimise the risk of contracting the virus, will be on the website this weekend. We had another update to the guidance yesterday and I am currently making final tweaks. If you have any concerns about the measures we have in place or would like to make any comments to improve the mitigation of the risks, please do contact me.

As you will appreciate there is still much uncertainty about the risk of Covid-19 spreading in school setting. Whilst it is widely acknowledged that children are at a reduced risk of contracting the virus or, if they do, suffering with anything other than mild symptoms, there are a number of adults teaching our children who are a significant risk of contracting the virus and becoming very poorly. There is also the risk that your child will bring the virus home with them and risk transmitting this to you and yours. We must all therefore comply with the protective measures in place at school on a daily basis and respect that the

risk to teachers, and therefore the risk of having to close the school if teachers contract the virus, is still present. Please be aware, and share with your child, the importance of behaving in a safe manner at school at all times and respecting the social distancing and control measures we have in place. I will not hesitate to take action with those children who refuse to comply and support us at this anxious time. For those children who travel to school by Local Authority Home to School transport (taxi) – you will have received a letter today explaining the measures that Oxfordshire County Council have put into place to transport your child to school during the next term. If you have any questions about this letter/transport then please speak to your child’s teacher next week when we call. With regard to other modes of transport your child may use – please ensure they have available, and wear, a mask on public transport (train/bus). If you are ‘giving a lift’ to other children in your car at the same time as your child, please ensure you follow government guidance to all wear a mask during the journey.

Thank you for your patience and support during the difficult exam results period. We have several queries still outstanding, GCSE exam grades still to be released or come in from Home Schools and of course the BTEC results to be released. I was delighted with our results this year – many of our children often struggle with the exam papers themselves and are often not rewarded with a grade that they have been working at throughout the year because of their anxieties with exams or the sheer intensity of sitting two/three papers for each subject. Students achieved some excellent grades – all well-deserved and the result of lots of hard work – I will share them on our website in due course. If there are any students who wish to take an exam and aim for a higher grade in November then please notify us by the end of the first week in September.

If your child has secured their next destination – job/college place/apprenticeship – we wish him/her all the very best. We are proud that they have developed the confidence to move on to their next step and to continue their study or to begin their careers in the workplace. There may be some of our students who are still without a destination – we will check this on our first calls home in September and will do all we can to support your child to secure something they are happy with and will help them make that transition as soon as possible.

Wearing a face-covering at school will be expected at certain times of the day. Students do not have to wear a mask in the taxi to school but **must bring a mask to school** to wear **when required** - this may be at times when staff and students are moving around the school together or being supervised by adults close by. This can be a disposable mask and means a fresh mask everyday or a washable one which I advise you wash each day as the virus can sit on surfaces for 72hrs (3 days). I have explained previously, and many of you have visited the school on induction with your child so you have seen for yourself, that the school sites are very small and confining different year groups to different areas is near on impossible in our school. Each site will do all it can to minimise occasions when a large number of people are in the same space but where this will occur – breaktimes/lunchtimes/start and end of the day – **your child must wear a mask if asked to**. Refusal to comply with any reasonable request at these and other times of the day may result in your child not being able to attend school. We are as you would expect now, well placed to continue your child’s education at home if he/she is not willing to comply with the protective measures we have in place. We do not anticipate that children will wear a mask in classrooms. Around the building we will be adopting the 2m social distancing rule where possible. In classrooms it will be between 1m and 2m depending on the size of the classroom. **Each of our sites will agree when during the day we will require students to wear a mask around the school: this will be shared with students on their first day back**. Some of our sites may not require students to wear a mask because there are not as many congested areas of concern in the building and we can maintain social distancing safely. Primary students are not required to wear a mask but may bring them to wear if preferred.

Please familiarise yourself with the government guidance and our risk assessment with regard to your child becoming unwell with covid-19 symptoms: these now include the loss of taste and smell as well as the previous continuous cough and high temperature. If your child is unwell at home please do not send him/her to school. If you suspect they have Covid-19 symptoms please keep your child at home, notify school and request a test as soon as possible. Your child must self-isolate for 14 days if he/she does present with symptoms (this will reduce to 10 if he/she tests positive). If your child presents with symptoms at school **you will have to arrange to collect your child or arrange for someone else to pick them up from school**. School staff will not be able to transport your child home and School Transport may refuse to transport a child who is symptomatic. Your child will also not be able to travel home on public transport.

We are looking forward to meeting all our students again in September and to welcoming new students into the school gradually as the term progresses. I very much hope that we are able to continue throughout the year without any further disruption to your child's learning but I would like to stress the risk of a repeat and the importance of your child making every hour in school count. Many of our children take quite some time to settle into the school and time has never been more precious for them to 'knuckle down' as my Dad used to say, and start to build a portfolio of work that demonstrates what he/she is capable of achieving. If we are in another Centre Assessed Grade situation next year then what we have learned is that we can only give a grade for the work that the students have produced/demonstrated/evidenced.

There have been some site changes to some of our programmes and some building work going on over the last year/months which your child can expect to see when they return: the new building on the Oxford site is expected to be ready to move in to in November (photos on the website soon); the Banbury site has had a car park makeover during the holiday; the Ambrose House team have moved to The Orchard in Abingdon and Discovery has moved to Kidlington to join the On Course team at The Forum. We also welcome several new staff to the school who are excited to be working with your child and supporting them on their path to success over the coming year: Luke Oliver (Maths) Oxford base, Sally Capel (Maths) Banbury Base, Sarah Crothers (part-time Hospitality) Banbury, Kerry Jackson (KS3 Teacher Discovery) Kidlington, Rachael McCabe (Coach Mentor Discovery) Kidlington, Karen Lawrence (Administrative Assistant) Oxford, Jon Roberts (Music/Work Related Learning) Banbury, Emma Butler (English) Banbury.

I do hope your son/daughter is looking forward to coming back to school in September and that they enjoy the last few days of their holiday. I look forward to working with you too over the course of the year and thank you again for your support over the last year.

Kind regards



Nicola (Partridge)  
Headteacher