



Thursday, August 05, 2021

Return to School arrangements – Year 8

Dear Parent or Guardian,

We hope that you and your family are having a safe and enjoyable summer. As you know, we have worked incredibly hard since the start of the pandemic to ensure WOA is a safe environment for our students. I would like to thank our students and their families for their incredible support over the last academic year.

Year 8 students will join the academy on Friday 10th September. Students should be in school for 8.45am.

If your child was self-isolating during our enrichment days and missed out on the chance to go on a trip then an additional trip has been arranged for Thursday 9th September. Mr. Harris will be in contact directly with those affected with more details.

[NHS Test and Trace: COVID- 19 Guidance September and COVID-19 testing for students](#)

At the start of the Autumn term, the following changes will be in place, in line with the new guidance:

- **Bubble system:** It will no longer be necessary to keep children in bubbles. This means that there will no longer be a bubble system when we return to school in September for the start of the new academic year, as things currently stand. However, we will still be assigning each year group a social space and food collection point for use at break and lunchtimes.
- **Contact tracing:** moving forward close contacts of a positive case will be identified via NHS Test and Trace and not by school staff.
- **Self-isolation for children and young people:** From Monday 16th August, children under the age of 18 years old will no longer be required to self-isolate if they are contacted by NHS Test and Trace as a close contact of a positive COVID-19 case, they will only need to self isolate if they have COVID-19 symptoms or a positive COVID-19 test result, obtained through either a PCR or Lateral Flow Test. As previously, we would request that students do not attend school should they be showing symptoms of COVID-19. We can also confirm that self-isolating students will still have access to remote learning while self-isolating – your support in ensuring this work is completed is vital and appreciated
- **Face coverings:** Face coverings will no longer be advised for students, students, staff and visitors either in classrooms or in communal areas. From 4th September, face coverings are also no longer recommended to be worn on dedicated transport to school or college and are no longer legally required on public transport. Students and staff are free to wear masks if they chose to



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- We will be keeping our enhanced cleaning regime so all communal areas and touch points will be cleaned regularly throughout the day
- We will encourage all staff, students and visitors to follow 'catch it, bin it, kill it' and will provide hand sanitizer, tissues and cleansing wipes in all areas of the academy
- We will ensure all spaces have ventilation and use the ventilation as much as possible; while keeping spaces comfortable

Although there will be changes as part of the easing of restrictions, as a school we will have outbreak management plans in place, as required by the Government, to ensure we are prepared to continue to operate if there is transmission of the virus in our school or the local community. These will mean that if the situation requires it, a bubble system or other measures may need to be temporarily reinstated in the future, and we must stress that the safety measures in place will be continually reviewed and assessed in accordance with Government and local guidance.

As has been the case throughout the pandemic, ensuring the health and safety of our students and staff is our top priority. As such, we will be continuing to encourage good hygiene including regular handwashing, maintaining appropriate cleaning regimes and keeping occupied spaces well ventilated.

Academy Testing in September:

Asymptomatic testing: As students will potentially mix with lots of other people during the summer holidays, the government guidance states that all secondary school students should receive two onsite lateral flow tests, on their return in September. Schools can stagger the return of students across the first week to manage this. Students should then continue to test twice weekly at home until the end of September, when this will be reviewed.

At WOA testing will occur for year 8 students in our on-site facility on:

Wednesday 8th September Students will attend at their allocated time for a test and induction session with their tutor. Times will be confirmed via text message in advance. Following the test students will return home.

The Second test will be taken on **Friday 10th September** as part of their return to school package.

We have attached an updated consent form as the guidance has changed. Please can your child bring this with them on their first test. We cannot complete a test without a completed consent form. IF YOU HAVE ALREADY GIVEN CONSENT AND BEEN CONDUCTING HOME TESTING YOU DO NOT HAVE TO GIVE CONSENT AGAIN.

Up to one third of people who have coronavirus experience no symptoms. By testing, we will help to stop the virus spread and help to keep our school open as safely as possible. The test is voluntary. However, I would strongly encourage all students and staff to take part as well. The test is quick, simple and painless but could really help us keep everyone safe.



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Those taking the test will be supervised by trained staff. The lateral flow tests are quick and easy using a swab of your nose and throat. For under-18s, staff can oversee the swab process. Results take around half an hour from testing and will be shared directly with staff and students participating. Where participants are under-16, parents or legal guardians will also be informed.

If you are happy for your child to be tested, please:

- Complete the enclosed consent statement (one per student) and return it and the completed form and ensure your child brings it with them to the academy during their first testing slot.
- If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact Jo Willetts (joanne.willetts@woacademy.co.uk) and we will do all we can to support you.

In the meantime, we would like to take this opportunity to wish you and your family a very safe and enjoyable summer break. We look forward to seeing all of you in the new academic year. Please remember if you need us or any additional support before our return to school please contact us via Facebook or email.

Please do continue to take care and stay safe.

Yours Sincerely

Leigh Moore
Principal

Myk Wagstaff
Vice Principal