

Monday 15th March 2021

Dear parent/carer,

It was wonderful to welcome students back last week. Thank you for your patience as we staggered their return. Attendance on Thursday was excellent - at 96%. I do hope that continues to be the case.

Students really benefited from having time to catch up with their friends and staff in their Wellbeing sessions. They should all be familiar with the procedures we have in place, many of which were introduced back in September. As you know there are a couple of new measures which the government have asked schools to put in place to further reduce the risk of coronavirus transmission.

### **Lateral Flow testing**

This has gone really well and students have shown great maturity whilst participating in the process. All students have had their first on site test and many will have had their second test by the time you receive this communication. Please can I ask that you ensure your child knows if you have given consent for testing, as this will help the process go smoothly. Towards the end of this week we will issue each student with a home testing kit. There are three tests in the kit and we have been informed that we will be receiving more to send home to you for the remaining three weeks of this term. We will be sending out a separate email about the process for home testing.

Since we started testing students last Monday we have had two positive results. Close contacts of these students were alerted immediately. As you are aware: when an individual is identified as a close contact they must isolate for 10 days. There is no need for anyone in the household to isolate unless they develop symptoms. Remote Learning will be available on google classroom and will be uploaded at the end of each day for any student that has to isolate or is Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV). I do understand that it is far from ideal when your child has to isolate but we all know how important this control measure is.

### **New Date for Learning Coach Consultation Day (LCCD)**

You may remember this was scheduled for the 29th and 30th April. However we feel this is too soon by which to assess and gather data on students' progress, after returning from lockdown. We have moved the date of assessments, with the exception of Year 11 and 13. These assessments will then be used for Progress Checks in mid May. Parents and carers will then receive these in advance of the new LCCD. This will now take place on 27th and 28th May, just before half term. We will send out details of how to book appointments in May.

### **Uniform and masks**

Students have returned looking so smart. A huge thanks for your support on this. Students are also being extremely responsible about wearing masks throughout the day. Long may that continue!

### **CAF news**

Look out for a brand new CAF Easter newsletter in your inbox this week.

**CEV staff**

Please be aware we currently have five staff members who are CEV and who must continue to shield. They are all teaching remotely. Lessons are being streamed and there is a cover teacher with any KS3 or KS4 class that would normally be taken by the CEV member of staff. I appreciate this is not ideal but the quality of the virtual lessons is excellent. We are very much hoping that shielding will come to an end after the Easter break.

When the students returned some year groups reflected on this verse from Isaiah 43:19 in their assemblies. It was also something we reflected on as a staff body when we met together last Friday: *For I am about to do something new. See, I have already begun! Do you not see it? I will make a pathway through the wilderness.*

Whilst we have some hard work ahead to make sure our students settle back into learning at the academy, especially those in exam years; this is an exciting fresh start. We must believe 'this time it's different' and that we have endured our last lockdown for 2021. Here's to the final four months of the academic year.

I hope you have a good start to your week and that your children are not too tired by being back at the Academy!

Yours faithfully,

Mariella Ardron  
Principal