



4 September 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

Return to the Academy this week

I am writing to you with an update as we near the end of the first couple of days of school.

I have been astounded by the excellent behaviour and support as our youngsters have returned to school this week. Our new Year 7 cohort have been a breath of fresh air and have fitted in well since their transition day on Wednesday. I am sure there will be some tired youngsters by bedtime tonight!

Year 8 have transitioned well and have been excellent examples to their younger peers. They have also been very patient as they utilise their bubble as we have obviously made changes to the way we work for now.

Year 9 have worked well so far in their bubble and are getting used to the new normal. I have been very impressed with their maturity so far. Years 10 and 11 have been just incredible; responsible, mature and following our guidance without question or difficulty.

Finally, the sixth form have been excellent examples. As we embark on our first year as a stand-alone sixth form the future looks very bright for them and for us as an Academy.

However, I have received some concerning reports of social media posts, particularly on Facebook. These posts claim to have found our approach wanting in relation to the Academy's reopening. I would strongly recommend any parent with a worry or concern not to post on social media but to contact the Academy instead. We are following our risk assessment and operating procedures fully and to the letter. Some posts range from claiming that youngsters have been refused food at lunchtime to the claim that we are not following bubbles and all students are allowed to mingle. These are entirely inaccurate claims.

I spent the whole day walking around yesterday, including before and after school. Youngsters were well-behaved and afforded all the correct opportunities for toilet visits, sanitisation as well as food and drink. I went into many classrooms and addressed year groups in person by form. My Deputy did the same.

If I feel this Academy has transgressed or come up short I will hold my hands up and apologise to you all. In this case, I do not feel this is necessary. I have been very satisfied so far with the past few days and, whilst nothing is perfect, I am prepared to walk any parent with concerns around my school for them to see for themselves the work that is going on to reintegrate all students successfully to school. We have absolutely nothing to hide. Please be mindful that social media contributions without any foundation cause unnecessary anxiety for our student body at a time when it can be ill afforded.

In addition, we have received communication from North Kesteven Academy that they have been contacted by some members of our parent body claiming that we have told students it is not necessary to wear face coverings on public transport. Again, this is inaccurate and makes our job much harder whilst fanning the flames of worry where it isn't needed.

To be clear, masks are mandatory on public transport. I agreed joint principles with the Head at NKA prior to the summer which I have shared with you before now. They are included below:

- We strongly encourage all students to wear a face covering to and from school, especially if social distancing is not possible. This includes on public transport.
- When catching buses, all students should do so from their own school site. Anyone who does not follow this request will be sent back to their own school and parents will be called.
- We encourage all students to carry a pocket sized hand sanitizer for use in school.
- Where possible, all students should go straight home at the end of the school day and should not use public transport unless there is no other option.

Our youngsters have done well this week and my staff have been superb. I am very proud of all of them.

As a very large school we are doing our level best to ensure your child's safety and will continue to do so. If you wish to take a look at our work in these strange times, please contact the Academy via email at enquiries@srpa.co.uk. Either I, or a member of the senior team, will be happy to show you around following Covid guidelines to put any concerns to bed. Alternatively, there are some short videos on the home page of the website showing Years 8, 10 and 11 going into the building this morning under social distancing guidelines with staff accompanying them.



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I have also spoken, at length, with our Chair of Governors. He remains fully supportive.

In the meantime, have a lovely weekend. It has come at the end of a stressful week for many youngsters. I am incredibly grateful for the many well wishes and emails of support for us this week as we have opened up again. The tide of positivity has carried us through the week as we have faced up to our 'new normal.' We are proud to serve our community and we do it knowing we are making a difference.

We will go again next week.

Take care and stay safe.

Yours faithfully



Mr D Hardy
Head Teacher



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