



16 September 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

**General update, Reopening strategies, attendance, coverage of the curriculum, intervention and support, remote learning in the future, Bus service lists of pupils, Critical worker parent records, New Covid email address**

I am writing to you with my usual weekly update.

Yesterday, my letters to all parents and carers were a rushed affair in order to meet the timelines for informing you all of events. Today will be more of an overview with some valuable updates about other important things so that you know we are still concentrating on our core business of educating your children.

It has been a week where we have done plenty of learning. When looking to return from any incident/pandemic or accident it is always vital to plan, prepare, stress test and implement. We have continued to refine our plans over the past few days with changes to flow in Years 10 and 11, canteen tweaks and movement of zones for best usage. We cannot and will not stand still in our endeavours when battling the virus and this will remain our mantra for the coming days and weeks.

In addition, the infection rate in North Kesteven on 1<sup>st</sup> September was 3.5 cases per 100,000 people. As of 12 September that has risen to 24 cases. The national average is 18. Cases have risen and, with that, the risk of infection has increased. It has never been more important that our community comes together to be mutually supportive. **Hands, Face. Space.** is all important as a clear message and we will do our bit to ensure it is followed through at the Academy.

You are already aware of the steps we have put in place to ensure the safe return of all pupils to school. We know that you will be keen to understand the impact that we have had in our first weeks of the term, and what our plans are to ensure all pupils catch up with any missed learning, and what will happen if a pupil or pupils is asked to stay at home over the coming months.

## Reopening strategies

### Key Principles:

- Everyone is as safe as possible within the constraints of operating with everyone in school
- Government guidance adhered to
- Keep as much normal as possible for students and staff

- Transition to normal is smooth when the time comes
- Geographical bubbles in the school
- Use of the school building changes
- School day timings remain in large part with some staggered break and lunch arrangements

### **Structural changes to allow 'bubble' arrangements:**

- Each year group has a bubbled area of the school
- Y7 English corridor
- Y8 Humanities and Languages
- Y9 Mathematics corridor
- Outside large playground becomes Y7, 8, 9 zones for social and lining up – 750 students on large playground
- Y10 Art & DT block
- Y11 Science block
- KS5 fit around options rooming in those areas and groups size allocations

Social times – All year zone areas have been flipped. KS4 use the small playground with access to the field behind science (weather dependent).

The Sixth Form common room stays and is socially distanced for usage.

### **Attendance**

In terms of attendance, the Academy has made a positive start to the new term. With the average attendance for the first two weeks of term at 96.7% compared with 94.0% in the two weeks before lockdown. The current national average is 88%. We are pleased that so many of our youngsters have returned to their education and we thank parents and carers for their support in this successful start.

### **Coverage of the curriculum**

During the lockdown, a comprehensive remote learning provision was introduced to ensure that all young people were fully supported, both academically and pastorally. Every Monday, bespoke curriculum plans were published on the school website, one per year group, outlining the work that students were to complete over the following week. PE sessions were included in these plans to encourage students to maintain a healthy lifestyle and our Ready2Learn programme continued in order to develop students' knowledge of SMSC and British values. Any student without appropriate internet access received a paper copy of the curriculum plan to ensure they were not disadvantaged.



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For students in year 10 and year 12, this provision was supplemented by timetabled lessons delivered via Microsoft Teams. These provided students with valuable opportunities to discuss their learning with expert subject specialists in order to ensure that progress continued.

For those students in year 11 and year 13, we provided a specialised programme to ensure that all students experienced a smooth transition to their next steps. This included a comprehensive sixth form induction process for year 11 students and a range of voluntary qualifications for students to complete from providers such as The Open University and Eton College.

In addition to academic support, tutors contacted students and parents on a weekly basis to offer guidance and support for their home learning and wider pastoral needs.

Since return from lockdown our students have been bubbled in year groups. There has been no reduction in curriculum provision. Our Heads of Department used all assessment data and academic information that was gathered in the last two weeks of lockdown to re-plan or re-order their autumn curriculum where necessary in order to compensate for any gaps in student knowledge.

As an academy, we have a strategic Curriculum Recovery Plan that encompasses every area of the curriculum to ensure that students are supported academically and pastorally to either close learning gaps and/or make exceptional progress. Our current assessment policy already has a focus on continuous assessment and therefore we have enhanced this by collating the evidence of all such assessment, particularly for examination years, into one central place.

In addition to this, our staff CPD programme has continued to be as extensive, albeit remotely, and has a focus on curriculum delivery and pedagogy to enable all staff, particularly those new to the profession, to deliver consistently effective and engaging lessons.

## Intervention and support

As part of our curriculum offer, we are beginning to roll out the intervention support programme to help some students access further catch up literacy and mathematics provision. Those students identified as requiring some further intervention work will be enrolled on our Lexia programme to support literacy and the Maths Symphony programme to support mathematics.

These intervention sessions will run during the school day and will be facilitated by Mr Adlington, Executive SENCO, and his team of support staff. All intervention will follow the Academy's strict and robust COVID-19 risk assessment and will adhere to year group bubbles. To further support our students, Learning Support Assistants are deployed accordingly across the year groups. These support staff will also be placed in year group bubbles and will adhere



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to following the Academy's risk assessment by socially distancing themselves while in the classroom supporting students.

Please rest assured that the students are well looked after and before we consider any further intervention work across the Academy, the safety of the students and staff is of greatest importance.

### **Remote learning in the future**

Our remote learning programme over lockdown was incredibly effective, so much so, that the Local Authority used it as a local case study. We are continuing with this same format for all year groups where needed. Curriculum plans will be posted on the website by 9am of the day the work is needed.

### **Mental health and well-being**

#### *SRPA Planner*

Pupils have pages in their planners that provide information on wellness and emotional/mental health. They can use this to help understand their feelings, emotions and mental state along with strategies to help support them.

*SRPA homepage* - <https://www.srpa.co.uk/rp-hub/>

The homepage provides a link to our levels of services, as outlined below, as well as our wider community work with Talking Men – a mobile app to support the prevention of male suicide and signposting various organisations that support matters surrounding this issue.

*Kooth* - <https://www.srpa.co.uk/kooth/>

Kooth helps to reduce wait times for young people seeking help and removes stigma around mental health. Kooth integrates with face-to-face local services to ensure a seamless transition for young people. Kooth is: - Safe, confidential, anonymous - Free at the point of need - Available through a smart phone, tablet or computer

*Shout* – text 85258

Shout is the UK's first 24/7 text service, free on all major mobile networks, for anyone in crisis anytime, anywhere. It's a place to go if adults are struggling to cope and need immediate help.



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## *Mentoring*

Staff and peer to peer mentoring to provide pupils with a familiar face and supportive role models to help pupils with their individual needs.

## CASY

Professional counselling that aims to support pupils with all of their emotional and mental health needs.

## **Bus service lists of pupils**

In order for the Academy to have an up to date list of which bus service our pupils travel on, we would be very grateful if you would complete the form below. This will help us to streamline our communications to you.

<https://vle.srpa.co.uk/app/os#!314ca75240d7809475197d6add38507c/bus-communications>

## **Critical worker parent records**

We are currently updating our records and would like all students who have a parent defined as a 'critical worker' to ensure they have completed the form linked below.

The definition of 'critical worker' is based on the latest documentation available. Please check the document for categories and job roles that are covered:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>

If your job role is included then please complete this form:

<https://vle.srpa.co.uk/criticalworkerupdate/form>

## **New Covid email address**

As we enter a new phase of our Covid response, we have a new email address available for all Covid-19 enquiries, concerns or questions. If you wish to ask anything or share anything with us, please use this address so that we can free up the enquiries@ email address. The email address is [COVID@srpa.co.uk](mailto:COVID@srpa.co.uk).

Thank you for your continued support in getting all pupils back into school safely over the past month. All of us are committed to providing the best education possible for your child, while



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securing the health and safety of our whole school community. Thank you for continuing to follow public health guidelines and encouraging your children to do the same.

Headship can often feel like you are sailing on a boat. Sometimes you have the wheel as you navigate choppy waters, showing others how you want them to take the helm when you can't be there. At other times, the waters are more calm but vigilance is key when looking for the possible obstacle ahead. Then there are the times when the storm is upon you and it is all hands on deck to ensure no one goes overboard. It has been a while since I sailed my ship through the calm and, under current circumstances it can feel like the winds are buffeting us. Please bear with us. We are working tirelessly to be the best we can be.

In the words of William Arthur Ward, "The pessimist complains about the wind; the optimist expects it to change; the realist adjusts the sails."

Have a good week. I will write again soon.

Yours faithfully



**Mr D Hardy**  
**Head Teacher**



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