



1 October 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

Covid-19 including testing and plans for the vaccination of healthy 12 to 15 year olds, road safety, examination consultation outcomes for summer 2022, PD Day next week, tutor evenings – Years 7, 10 and 12, online resource support sheet, GL testing

Sometimes working in education can feel like an impossible fight.

This week has been a week of highs and lows – we must learn from the lows and celebrate the highs.

Firstly, it was amazing to see our fine youngsters play their first round of sports fixtures yesterday after so long away from it due to Covid. Our Year 8 boys' football team won 3-2 versus William Farr. Our Year 10 and 11 football teams and our Year 9 netball team did not emerge victorious but I was so proud of them for their attitude and demeanour wearing our badge with integrity. Honesty, friendliness and calmness will always win the day.

Covid-19 including testing and plans for the vaccination of healthy 12 to 15 year olds

Earlier in the week you may have seen the article in the Lincolnite about the national hoax communication towards schools about vaccinations, of which we were a victim. I have never been afraid to apologise when we get something wrong and this is one of those times. The responsibility was mine and mine alone. I acted with the best of intentions and fell victim to a carefully orchestrated plan to dupe schools. It was certainly very convincing. I apologise to anyone who was inconvenienced by this and hope that our swift actions to remedy the situation were well received.

Frankly, the whole episode was an absolute aberration and the perpetrators should be ashamed of themselves. All this has served to do is to fuel my resolve to protect the interests of my children. I will not sway from that role and will stand up to fight for them no matter what and how unpopular it may make me.

Our Covid-19 vaccination day is yet to be confirmed. As with the flu vaccinations this week, the Covid-19 vaccinations will be led in full by the Schools Age Immunisation Service (SAIS) and the same principles will apply. Please direct any enquiries related to these vaccinations to this service in the first instance as we are only providing the site for this purpose.

If any parents have any other concerns related to Covid-19 in school, please contact us at the Academy using the email address COVID@srpa.co.uk.

Road safety

Yesterday, we also saw one of our youngsters knocked down on Moor Lane before school. I was so very proud of the behaviour of my youngsters as they came into the Academy in the circumstances and was equally proud of my incredible staff team who rallied around the young man (who is a fine addition to our Academy by the way) and supported in the street with umbrellas and blankets in the wet conditions. Thanks must also go to my staff members who directed traffic and liaised with the police and paramedics so effectively. We will always serve our community to the best of our ability. Hopefully we will be judged by our actions rather than by my words.

It is noteworthy though that this incident goes some way to remind us starkly of the need for road safety in the local area. Moor Lane is very busy so please remind your youngster of the need to be sensible and safe in their behaviour to and from school. I have repeatedly shared my concerns about the busy nature of Moor Lane and Newark Road with Lincolnshire County Council and will continue to do so.

Examination consultation outcomes for summer 2022

Today, the DfE and Ofqual published a number of documents setting out plans for GCSEs, AS levels, A levels, and vocational and technical qualifications next year. These include the following:

- A [‘decisions document’](#) setting out what changes will be put in place for GCSEs, AS and A levels in 2022, following the recent DfE/Ofqual consultation on this.
- An [article](#) by new Chief Regulator Dr Jo Saxton, explaining Ofqual’s approach to grading next year, and a [blog](#) setting this out for students.
- A [consultation](#) on the contingency arrangements for GCSEs, AS and A levels.
- [Guidance](#) on the contingency arrangements for vocational and technical qualifications.

Key points affecting us from these documents are below:

Adaptations

- There will be optional topics and content in GCSE English literature, history and geography.
- If necessary, centres will be allowed to deliver practical work in GCSE biology, chemistry, physics and combined science by demonstration.



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- Centres will be allowed to assess the Common Practical Assessment Criteria (CPAC) across the minimum number of practical activities required to enable students to demonstrate their competence in A level biology, chemistry and physics.
- Students taking GCSE and A level art and design will be assessed on their portfolio only.
- Examination boards will provide advanced information about the focus of the content of exams for all GCSE and A level subjects except GCSE English literature, history, and geography by **7 February 2022** at the latest. This could be released earlier 'if circumstances require'.
- Students will be given a formulae sheet for GCSE mathematics and a revised equation sheet for GCSE physics and combined science.

Grading

- 2022 will be a 'transition year' to reflect the fact that we are in a pandemic recovery period and students' education has been disrupted.
- Ofqual will therefore aim for grades in 2022 to reflect a midway point between 2021 and 2019. This means that results overall next year will be higher than in 2019 but not as high as in 2020.
- Examination boards will use data as a starting point, to align their standards in a subject. But the grade boundaries for each specification will be set by the senior examiners after they have reviewed the work produced by students.
- Grades for students sitting exams in autumn 2021 will be aligned with grading in summer 2021.
- When predicting grades for UCAS this year, Ofqual recommends that teachers use the 2019 standard as the basis, but that they give borderline students the benefit of any doubt.
- Organisations awarding VTQs are expected to take account of the approach for GCSEs and A levels when setting standards in their own qualifications.
- In 2023, Ofqual aims to return to results that are in line with those in pre-pandemic years.

Results days

Results for examinations next year will return to their normal format, with A levels being released on **18 August**, and GCSEs on **25 August**. VTQs used to progress in a similar way will be issued on or before the same days, and other VTQ results will continue to be issued throughout the year.



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Contingency plans

- The government has launched a two-week consultation on what contingency arrangements should be put in place if GCSE and A level examinations cannot go ahead as planned in 2022.
- The government's proposal is essentially a tweaked TAG process, with tighter guidance on the evidence on which TAGs would be based. Specific suggestions include:
 - planned assessment points from which to gather evidence (e.g. once in each of the late autumn, spring and early summer terms)
 - the use, at these assessment points, of approaches which replicate examination board papers and examination conditions
- It is likely that the government will produce guidance on this process, once the consultation is complete and the final approach is agreed.
- Guidance on contingency arrangements for VTQs has already been published, as part of this package.

This advises:

- using TAGs for those VTQs which are most similar to GCSEs and A Levels
- delaying VTQs awards that require students to demonstrate occupational/professional competence, to ensure that students are able to demonstrate the full set of knowledge and skills required

PD Day next week

Our first personal development day of the year takes place next week. These are days where all students are off timetable to engage in different elements of their own personal development. These are categorised into one of the three main threads of living in the wider world, health and wellbeing and developing healthy relationships.

Next week we have some fantastic sessions planned for our students to explore. These will include sessions to develop their understanding of British Values, alongside our very own SRPA Values. As part of these sessions students will look at their own identity and exploring Britishness, as well as our regular session on SRPA Voices. This is where we listen to some of very own students talk about their experiences, with next week focussing on students in armed forces families.

We will also be launching our very own Learning 2 Learn programme (L2L). Students will have the opportunity to reflect on how they learn, develop their understanding of their own learning styles and how they learn best. Enrichment activities will also be planned for year 8, year 10 and year 11 to 13. Students get to choose which sessions to opt into. These range from House



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dodgeball competitions, through to culinary skills development, managing your money and mindfulness.

Our personal development days are an opportunity to for us to invite external visitors into the Academy. On this occasion, we welcome Brandon Hunt, who is a 22 year old singer songwriter from Scunthorpe. He has been tipped by BBC Radio 1 as the next big British male singer being compared to George Ezra. Brandon has been performing for over 10 years, and pre-covid he supported McBusted on tour and will soon be heading off to LA to work with songwriters. Brandon has had his own struggles with mental health over the last few years, which is evident in the lyrics of his new music, so he feels he is in the perfect position to promote a positive message regarding mental health, relationships and LGBTQ+ to our youngsters in year 8 and year 9.

Finally, I would like to mention the provision we have for our year 11 students. At this time in their journey with us, students will be looking to their next steps. We have planned sessions to explain in more detail what options they have, including familiarisation of our sixth form. Our year 12 and year 13 students will be providing tours, question and answer sessions around all of the different courses we offer, including support with the application process. Our year 12 students are in the best position to advise as they have just been through it. Information regarding college application and exploration of apprenticeships will also be provided.

If parents have any questions regarding the content of any of the sessions we will be running, please contact Mr Griffiths at JGriffiths@srpa.co.uk

Tutor evenings – Years 7, 10 and 12

We will be holding tutor evenings for the above year groups on 13 and 20 October to allow maximum flexibility for parents. This evening is a ‘settling in’ event to check in with tutors rather than subject teachers. Further details about how to book your slots with tutors will follow early next week.

Online resource support sheet

Please find attached with my letter the above support sheet to aid and support students and their parents in using our digital services, particularly in subject specialisms. This will also be placed on Frog. This is designed to ease the burden of using a myriad of logins.



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GL testing

This will continue for the coming weeks until completed across the year groups. Please continue to ask your child to bring a pair of headphones, if possible, to minimise sharing with Covid-19 in mind.

As we celebrate Lincolnshire Day, I must admit to feeling a bit arrad but there will be no beeling and I look forward to a good gawster over the weekend. Despite the challenges of the week, I remain undeterred and have a smile on my face. The many happy young folk in our care see to that. Next week we go again, but not before I have shared my weekly quote with you from Canadian author and travel adventurer Aaron Lauritsen who said “In life be your own person, think outside the box, chase your dreams, then follow your own path undeterred by the naysayers who follow the herd.”

Have a lovely weekend when it comes.

I will write again soon.

Yours faithfully



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