



17 July 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

I hope that you and your family are well at this time. As we reach the end of this academic year I would like to thank you for your understanding and support during this long and unprecedented period of school closure. The purpose of this letter is to update you on our planning for September.

September reopening

Earlier this month the government set out their intention for school to reopen 'to all pupils, in all years, full time' and provided us with guidance as to how to make the necessary adjustments and implement measures in response to COVID-19. You can read the full guidance by clicking [here](#)

Health and Safety

We are reviewing our health and safety risk assessment which will be approved by the Trust before students return in September. The risk assessment includes the following essential measures:

- a requirement that people who are ill stay at home
- robust hand washing and respiratory hygiene
- active engagement with NHS Test and Trace
- formal consideration of how to reduce contacts and maximise distancing for those in school wherever possible and minimise potential for contamination so far as is reasonably practicable

Arrangements to reduce mixing between groups

Students will be divided into three 'bubbles' which are 'year group size'. At Vale of York we have small year groups compared to most secondary schools so it is reasonable, and more effective, for us to create three 'bubbles'. By doing this we can also provide suitable arrangements for break and lunch times for all students.

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- Year 7 students will be located in the 1940s building as a 'bubble'. The students will have break in the Main Hall and adjacent Courtyard area, and lunch in the Dining Hall and nearby outdoor areas including the astroturf pitch. Following their Transition Day on Tuesday 8 September, from Wednesday 9 September Year 7 students will enter and leave school using the Dining Hall entrance behind the Sports Hall. Cycle storage will be available for Year 7 students at the back of the Sports Hall
- Years 8 and 9 students will share break and lunch as a 'bubble'. Year 8 students will enter and leave school using the PE door entrance, Year 9 using the Field door entrance. Cycle storage will be available in the existing cage by the entrance adjacent to the old primary school site. The year groups will be located in separate areas or 'zones' for lessons, Year 8 will be based in the ground floor Science area and Year 9 on the top floor situated above the English area.
- Year 10 and 11 will share break and lunch as a 'bubble'. Students in Year 10 and 11 will enter and leave school using the Courtyard entrance and cycle storage will be available in the Courtyard. The Year groups will be located in separate areas or zones for lessons, Year 10 in the maths area and Year 11 in the English area.

Each year group will be taught the large majority of lessons in their zones. Students will move classrooms within the zones for different lessons depending on the subject and groupings (eg. maths sets, option subjects, etc). After the first few weeks we will provide access to practical rooms, starting with GCSE subjects for students in Years 10 and 11.

Curriculum

We plan to deliver our broad and balanced curriculum from the start of term, but have made room changes to allow year groups to remain in their zones for most of the school day. For the first few weeks, access to practical rooms for subjects such as Science, Food, DT, Music, Drama and Art will be limited. This is because we wish to minimise disruption and ensure that we are able to operate effectively, and safely, to begin with. We await further information regarding additional funding for 'catch up support' and will allocate resources to meet need where necessary. We recognise that children will have experienced a range of emotions in response to the pandemic and we shall endeavour to support students through a range of strategies, including a well-being survey and pastoral care to follow up individual needs. Other than after school Homework Club which will be available from the start of term, we plan to introduce extra-curricular activities gradually where it is safe to do so.

Travel to school

Most students already either walk or cycle to school but we would encourage all students to do so in September. As mentioned previously, students will enter and leave the school building from different entrances at the start and end of each day. Those students who use public transport must adhere to government guidance.

ParentPay

Please note that we will be operating a fully cashless system from September; students will not be able to top up their accounts by bringing money into school. If you do not already have a ParentPay account, you can request login details by emailing us at hello@voy.hlt.academy.

Start of term

Monday 7 September - school closed to all students

Tuesday 8 September - school open to Year 7 students. 8.45am start.

Wednesday 9 September - school open to all students but the start will be staggered as follows:

- Year 7 - 8.45am
- Years 8 and 9 - 9.30am
- Years 10 and 11 - 10.00am

Thursday 10 September onwards - school open to all students starting with Lesson 1 at 8.50am. Students must arrive no later than 8.45am. School will end at 3.00pm for all students.

I will write to you again on 1 September to confirm arrangements and provide further detail on specific matters. All Risk Assessments and Additional Guidance will be posted on our website on the same date.

I am very much looking forward to seeing all students and staff in September. It will be great to reopen Vale of York Academy once again.

Until then I hope you have an enjoyable break over the summer.

Yours faithfully,



Mr T Eastaugh
Principal