

7th June 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

After a busy week briefing staff on our arrangements for extended opening, I am writing to update you all on where we are up to.

As you know, we are describing our provision as a rainbow school and, like every good rainbow, it will have two ends: the distance learning end and the extended opening end. On any given day, 90% of our students will be working through distance learning and that is where I want to start.

First of all, a huge thank you to all of you who are continuing to support distance learning in all kinds of ways. I really appreciate everything that you are doing to sustain students' effort and engagement. Many of you have asked questions about the virtual lessons. I am sorry that I have not had time to answer all of these questions directly but Mr Laverick has compiled a parent and student guide which I hope will help. It can be found at: <https://www.macclesfieldacademy.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Parent-Student-Guide-to-Virtual-Lessons.pdf>. The lessons for each week can be found at: <https://www.macclesfieldacademy.org/home-working/resources/>. On the same page there is a range of other information and advice which I know many parents have already found helpful. Some parents have emailed me directly with questions about re-setting passwords. I am afraid to say that this is well beyond my technical capacity! Please email any such requests to TMA.ICT.Support@macclesfieldacademy.org. Over the last week we have been systematically reviewing students' response to the work that has been set through an analysis of teacher feedback on how much they have engaged with the tasks on show my homework and how regularly they have submitted work for feedback. Over the next few weeks this will enable colleagues to offer targeted support to any who are finding it harder to work effectively at home. We will of course continue to support through providing feedback on the work submitted and phoning once a fortnight to check on how everything is going. If you have any questions about the process of home working, please do not hesitate to get in touch. Questions about the specific details of virtual lessons are best addressed to Richard.Laverick@macclesfieldacademy.org.

Now for some of the detail on our extended opening for Year 10 students as well as for the vulnerable students and the children of key workers. Thank you to all those Year 10 parents who have indicated on the Gateway whether or not their sons and daughters will be returning. (If you have a child in Y10 and have not yet done this, please do so as a matter of urgency.) At this stage it looks as though about 70% of the year group will be back in school, initially for one or two days a week.

This means we will be up to about 60 students per day in school. As a result, we have to organise things a little differently for all of our students including those who have been attending throughout the current crisis. **For our vulnerable students and the children of key workers**, this means that, with effect from 15th June:

- They will be divided into two groups: School Blue and School Yellow
- There will be a staggered day and each “School” will have its own starting time.
- It will be important that they do not arrive more than five minutes before this starting time
- They will enter the Academy via the South Yard and the Art Rooms, washing their hands in the Art Room sinks
- They will have a more fixed timetable than they have been used to. It will be important that they follow this timetable and do not wander into other rooms or mix with other groups.

For our returning Year 10 students, this means that:

- They will attend school for a 1:1 tutorial during the week beginning 15th June
- They will be allocated into a class (maximum of 10 students) for the week beginning 22nd June
- These classes will reflect both ability groupings and, where possible and appropriate, social grouping suggested by parents
- Three of these classes will make up one of the Y10 “schools”: School Green, School Orange, Indigo, and School Violet
- The schools will attend on separate days; the classes will be kept as separate as possible through the staggered days
- Students who have experienced difficulties making progress through distance learning will be eligible for an additional day in school each Friday

Across the whole Academy, we are implementing the following safety measures in addition to the small groups and the staggered days described above. These measures follow the “hierarchy of sensible measures” set out in the government guidance.

We will ***minimise contact with individuals who are unwell*** by:

- *Checking at the start of the day that students (and all those in their household) are symptom free*
- *Not admitting visitors to the Academy*
- *Isolating any students who show symptoms of Coronavirus until they can be collected*

We will ensure students are ***cleaning hands more often than usual*** by:

- *Ensuring all students wash their hands thoroughly with soap and hot water at the start of the day as they enter the building and then at the beginning and end of break, the beginning and end of lunchtime, and the end of the day.*
- *Allowing students to bring sanitiser to school for additional hand washing if required (this will be in addition to the use of soap and hot water and not as an alternative to it)*
- *Allowing students to bring hand cream or moisturiser into school if they find regular use of soap and water is affecting their skin.*

We will ensure that students are using **good respiratory hygiene** by:

- Requiring them to bring tissues to school
- Promoting the “catch it-bin it- kill it” approach through posters in classrooms
- Installing pedal bins in classrooms (subject to availability)

We will ensure that **cleaning** is regular and effective by:

- Limiting the number of rooms used on any day so that they can all be intensely cleaned at the end of the day
- Ensuring each “bubble” of students has its own teaching room which cannot be used by any other students
- Removing upholstered furniture from all the rooms used as this is difficult to clean
- Cleaning hand rails and door handles throughout the day.

We will **minimise contact and mixing** by:

- Placing students in self contained “bubbles” (see above)
- Allocating designated indoor and outdoor spaces for each “bubble”
- Staggering the start and finish of the school day
- Shortening breaks and lunchtime
- Implementing a one way system around the Academy
- Providing each student with a pack of equipment which not be used or touched by anybody else

There are a number of things that we will be asking **parents** to do to support these control measures. Please:

- ✓ Ensure your son or daughter has a packed lunch and any snack they need for the day
- ✓ Ensure that they do not bring any school equipment or other personal belongings into school
- ✓ Ensure that if they bring sanitiser or moisturiser into school, these are left in school and not continually transferred between school and home
- ✓ Ensure that they arrive on time no more than five minutes before their allocated starting time.

We are advising all staff and students to avoid public transport and car sharing travelling to school and remind students to follow social distancing rules when walking to school. The current instruction is not to be in groups of more than 6, all two metres apart.

Where uniform is concerned, from 15th June, we would like students to wear school uniform without blazers and ties where possible. However, the most important thing is that they are wearing clothes which can be washed at the end of each day.

Our full risk assessment will be uploaded to the website next week and I will send a link to it in my next email.

I believe that the process that we have been through over the last few weeks has been extremely rigorous. I am very grateful to Academy staff and governors for their contributions to the Risk Assessment and to our site staff in particular for the work they have done in implementing it. We need to be very clear, though, and say that all these measures cannot guarantee that all the risk of coming to school will be eliminated for everybody. Our aim has been to make coming to the Academy at least as safe as going to the supermarket, and I am confident that we have achieved this. However, for some children, this is not safe enough. If your child is clinically extremely vulnerable, or lives with someone who is, they should not come to school. If they are clinically vulnerable, you should take medical advice. If they belong to a black or minority ethnic group, there may be additional risks for them and, again, you should take medical advice.

I will do everything I possibly can to enable students to return to school as fast as it is safe to do so. But it must be safe. Information and advice about the wider context in which we are working continues to change weekly, sometimes daily and I will continue to take this into account in everything that I do over the coming days and weeks.

In the meantime, thank you again for all your support. Please take care and stay safe.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a series of loops and a final upward stroke, identifying Richard Hedge.

Richard Hedge

Headteacher

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