

Dear Parents and Carers,

As promised, I write to you to provide some further information on our plans for full reopening next week. You will already be aware that in my last letter (21st August 2020) we provided information on additional hygiene measures, procedures for before and after school, social times, uniform, equipment and arrangements for the start of term. The school's website has videos that outline the procedure for the first day back. The arrangements for the start of term remain unchanged:

Arrangements for the start of the autumn term	
Thursday 3 rd September 8.35am	Year 7 Year 11 Sixth form
Friday 4 th September 8.35am	Year 8 Year 9 Year 10 Sixth form
Monday 7 th September 8.35am	All year groups

***Please note that Years 7 and 11 are not in school on Friday 4th September**

The correspondence in this letter contains information relating to attendance, behaviour and attitudes, catering and PPE.

Attendance Matters

As I'm sure you are aware, from the start of the autumn term 2020 the government has confirmed that pupil attendance will be mandatory and the usual rules on attendance during the pandemic will apply, including:

- parents' duty to ensure that all children of compulsory school age attend regularly at the school where the child is a registered pupil
- schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence
- the ability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices, in line with local authorities' codes of conduct

Shielding advice for all adults and children paused on 1 August 2020. This means that even the small number of pupils who will remain on the shielded patient list can return to school, as can those who have family members who are shielding. If your child has been given clinical guidance to remain absent from school please contact us and we will discuss how we can support you.

We have created a helpful summary for parents related to any absences related to COVID-19 that can be found at the end of this letter in appendix 1.

At Workington Academy we are striving to improve students' attendance. Why?

Research has shown that there is a direct correlation between attendance and achievement. It is common sense that if a student is not in class then he or she is not learning.

What do the attendance figures mean? What is good attendance?

- 90% attendance – is this good? What it means is that the equivalent of half a day of school is missed each week. Would your boss put up with that?
- 90% attendance is about a month of school missed in a year – about 100 lessons!
- 90% attendance over 5 years equates to the loss of approximately half a school year – a massive amount of learning time missed.

90% attendance isn't so great! The DfES has reported that for every 17 days of school missed per year; a student will drop on average a full GCSE grade. We want to improve attendance so that your child's achievements will be maximized. Single days or the odd afternoon off school can add up!

Holidays

As usual, parents should plan their holidays within school breaks and avoid seeking permission to take their children out of school during term time. Families should also consider that their child may need to self-isolate following trips overseas that require a period of quarantine.

At school we can only authorise holidays during term time in truly **exceptional circumstances**. This is part of a government initiative to improve student outcomes in schools and we are obliged to enforce these rules. Any applications for a holiday in term time must be made in advance. A holiday request form may be obtained from the main office. We will always take individual circumstances into consideration. **Excessive missed sessions due to holidays may incur a fixed penalty notice.**

References

At the end of your child's time at Workington Academy (and sometimes during it), we will be asked for a reference. This may be for a full or part-time job, an apprenticeship, or a course at college or university. We are duty-bound to supply information on **punctuality and attendance** and it is really important that your child is not disadvantaged because of poor attendance.

Illness

Some medical appointments such as at a hospital or orthodontist may be unavoidable during the school day. Could you make every effort to schedule doctor, dentist, optician or other appointments out of school hours as far as possible. Obviously, there will be times when your child may be far too sick to attend school – you will know if it's just a sniffle or genuine illness.

What to do if your child is absent from school

- Please ring the Academy on 01900 873926, **before 9.00am** on every day of your child's absence. Give your name, your child's name, form and the reason for the absence.
- A signed and dated confirmation note from a parent or carer must be sent to your child's form tutor on his or her return. This can be written in the student planner.
- If your child is absent and we have not heard from you, you will receive a text message asking you to ring school with the reason for the absence so that we can update your child's attendance record.
- Should the absence be COVID-19 related please refer to our parent's guide (appendix 1)

Enforcement

Unauthorised absences carry the risk of prosecution under section 444 or 444 (1A) of The Education Act of 1996. The Department for Education has announced that the figure for persistent absence is 10%, i.e. if your child's attendance falls below 90%. This equates to about 18 days absence. We do not wish to use legal sanctions to prosecute parents for failing to ensure regular school attendance and will support families who need help, to give your children the best possible life chances.

All unauthorised absences, including holidays that have not been sanctioned by the Headteacher, are accumulated and parents who **fail to ensure regular attendance** of their children at school can be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice. The amount is £60 (per parent, per child) if paid within 21 days and £120 if paid between 21 and 28 days. Failure to pay a Penalty Notice will result in prosecution except in limited circumstances. It is therefore essential that parents take this into consideration if they are thinking of a family holiday in term-time.

If you are concerned about your child's attendance or wish to ask questions about attendance or punctuality procedures, then please contact your child's year group team.

Behaviour and Attitudes

When students return there will be several changes in place that are specific to reducing the risk of COVID-19 spread and infection. All of these changes have been shared with you in my previous correspondence and in the risk- assessments found on the Academy website.

We will continue to have high expectations of students regarding their behaviour and attitudes. We will continue to focus on maintaining this on full reopening through strong relationships between staff and students. Where necessary we will support students in re-establishing positive behaviour and attitudes through a positive discipline approach. Our relationships policy remains largely unchanged however you won't be surprised to hear that we will take a zero-tolerance approach towards breaches of our hygiene and social distancing routines.

There will also be some changes to the issuing of rewards and detentions. Rewards will be issued electronically and we will continue to reward and celebrate success of our students in our usual ways. Given that we will be introducing new routines we will actively look to reward students who adapt quickly to these.

Detentions will continue to be issued. However, to minimise mixing between bubbles we have allocated specific areas for break time detentions within each zone. After-school detentions will be allocated by Year Group, again, to minimise mixing. We will continue to communicate detentions with parents via text message, however students will no longer receive a paper slip. Instead, they will be informed by their form tutor who will prompt the student to make a note of the detention in their planner.

In light of the changes we would like you to read through our new COVID-19 home-school agreement with your child and ensure this is signed and returned to the Academy by Wednesday 9th September. We would encourage you to watch our welcome back videos, for each year group, on our social media feeds, as a means to discuss the changes that will be in place at the start of the new term.

Catering and cashless payment

Due to the current restrictions there will be a reduced catering offer in the short term, including hot and cold options. However, we will look to expand this as soon as safely possible. Students may still bring packed lunches, fruit and healthy snacks to school however these items must not be shared with others.

For those students purchasing food and drinks in school we ask that all money is placed onto their account remotely and that they do not bring money into school with them. Although students will still use our fingerprint biometric system to purchase items the cash uploading machines in school will not be accessible. If you have any issues with uploading money onto your child's account please get in touch with us.

PPE

As I'm sure you are aware the Government's stance on PPE, including face masks, has changed recently. Alongside this there has been much discussion over the past few weeks regarding masks. Our stance on this matter is that both students and staff are welcome to wear a face mask should they wish to do so. It is important to emphasise that any use of PPE merely supports the other good practices stated within all reopening correspondence and our thorough and detailed Risk Assessment.

The Academy will continue to listen to guidance and update and revise processes accordingly. Should masks become compulsory nationally or in light of a local lockdown, we would follow national developments. We would highly recommend that students have masks so that they have the flexibility, choice and peace of mind.

Lockers

Lockers will be available for all students and are located close to each year group's zone. Before lockers can be allocated students will need to clear out their existing one on the first day back in school. Lockers will then be cleaned and re allocated. Students must return their locker key to the main reception before a new one will be allocated.

Once again, we are looking forward to welcoming students back to the Academy to start the new term. The Academy has carefully planned for a smooth and safe opening ensuring all relevant guidelines are fully in place. Please check the school website regularly to keep up to date with all future developments.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mr D Bird', written in a cursive style.

Mr D Bird

Appendix 1 - Coronavirus (COVID-19) related absences reference guide – 13.08.2020

What to do if...	Action needed	Code	Return to school when...
...my child has COVID-19 symptoms	- Do not attend school - Make daily contact with the Academy - Self-isolate - Get a test - Inform the Academy immediately about test result	X	...the negative test comes back and no longer have symptoms similar to COVID-19.
...my child tests positive for COVID-19	- Do not attend school - Make daily contact with the Academy - Self-isolate for 10 days - Inform the Academy immediately about test result	I	...they have completed 10 days of self-isolation and do not have any symptoms other than a cough or loss of sense of smell or taste (both of which can last for several weeks after the virus is gone).
...somebody in my household has coronavirus symptoms	- Do not attend school - Make daily contact with the Academy - Self-isolate - Household member to get a test - Inform the Academy immediately about test result	X	...the household member test is negative
...somebody in my household has tested positive for coronavirus	- Do not attend school - Make daily contact with the Academy - Inform the Academy immediately about test result - Self-isolate for 14 days	X	...the child has completed 14 days of self-isolation.
...NHS test and trace have identified my child as a 'close contact' of somebody with a confirmed case of coronavirus	- Do not attend school - Make daily contact with the Academy - Self-isolate for 14 days	X	...the child has completed 14 days of self-isolation.

...we/my child has travelled and are required by legislation to self-isolate as part of a period of quarantine	- Do not take unauthorised leave during term time - Consider quarantine requirements and Foreign travel advice when booking - Provide information to the Academy as per the attendance policy <u>Returning from a destination where quarantine is needed:</u> - Do not attend school - Make daily contact with the Academy - Self-isolate for 14 days	X	...the quarantine period of 14 days has been completed.
...we have received medical advice that my child must resume shielding in a future local lockdown scenario	- Do not attend school - Make contact with the Academy as required by the Year Group Team - Share letter outlining guidance to enter shielding period	X	...the Academy informs you that restrictions have been lifted and your child can return to school again.

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Workington Academy COVID-19 Home-School Agreement



The most important symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19)

new and continuous cough

or

high temperature

or

loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

If **you have symptoms** of coronavirus, you need to **self-isolate for 7 days**
 If **you live with someone who has symptoms**, you need to **self-isolate for 14 days** from the day their symptoms started

For most people coronavirus will be a mild illness. However if you have any of the symptoms you should self-isolate at home

How can you stop coronaviruses spreading?

If you need to cough or sneeze

Catch it with a tissue

Bin it

Kill it by washing your hands with soap & water or hand sanitiser

You should wash hands with soap & water or hand sanitiser

After breaks & sport activities

Before cooking & eating

On arrival at any childcare or educational setting

After using the toilet

Before leaving home

Stop the spread of coronavirus

Wash your hands more often and for 20 seconds

Try not to touch your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands

Do not share items that come into contact with your mouth such as cups & bottles

If unwell do not share items such as bedding, dishes, pencils & towels

Workington Academy The academy will:

- Provide an environment which has been risk assessed in response to the COVID-19 infection.
- Adhere to the social distancing rules as set out by the government as much as we reasonably and practically can.
- Adhere to protective measures and hygiene controls to reduce the risk of infection.
- Provide a curriculum that meets the needs of your child's well-being, mental health and academic needs.
- Contact parents/carers if your child displays symptoms of COVID-19.
- Inform you if staff or children in your child's 'bubble' test positive for COVID-19
- Continue our clear and consistent approach to rewards and sanctions for children as set out in the Relationships Policy as well the expectations outlined in this agreement

Parents/Carers I will:

- If my child, or anyone in my household, shows symptoms of COVID-19, I will not send them to school. We will self-isolate for 14 days as a family. I will get them tested and I will let the school know the result as soon as possible via telephone or email.
- If my child shows symptoms of COVID-19 at school, I will collect my child from school immediately. I will get them tested and I will let the school know as soon as possible of the outcome via telephone or email.
- On my commute, and when dropping my child off and picking them up, I will adhere to the 2 metre social distancing rules.
- I will follow social distancing rules at all times whilst on school grounds.
- When dropping off and picking up, I will strictly stick to the school timings for my child.
- My child will only bring the relevant items into school with them or take items home from

Students I will:

- Follow the directions of all staff first time, every time.
- Follow the bubble and zone rules that keep me safe.
- Maintain social distancing whilst on route to school, in school, and on my journey home.
- Sterilise/wash my hands as soon as I go into school.
- Tell a member of staff if I feel unwell.
- Only use my own equipment unless provided with sterilised equipment from members of staff.
- Not mix with any other children in the school outside of my bubble.
- Only enter and exit the school building through the designated route.
- Follow the 'catch it-bin it-kill it' rules, coughing and sneezing into my elbow or a tissue.
- Regularly sterilise my hands or wash them using soap and running water for 20 seconds ensuring to dry thoroughly.

• Communicate with you through notices, newsletters, text, email and the school website	school except a breaktime snack, water bottle and face mask (face masks are optional). • If I supply my child with a face mask I understand that staff will not be responsible for ensuring that my child wears this throughout the day. • I will not be allowed into the school without a pre- arranged appointment –appointments can be made via telephone or email. • I need to support the Academy in their efforts to create an environment that is 'as safe as possible' during this time. • I will read all letters / messages / emails that are sent home. • I will inform the school of any changes to parents/carers and emergency contacts details. • If my child is deemed unsafe, he/she will be sent home and cannot return to school until they can be safe.	• Follow the rules at all times to maintain the safety of myself and others. • Follow these expectations and know that if I don't, I will be sent home and will not be able to come back into school until the Headteacher agrees that I can be safe.
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Parent/ Carer Name: _____ **Signed:** _____ **Date:** _____

Student Name: _____ **Signed:** _____ **Date:** _____

Appendix 3 - Table of entrances/exits and year group teaching zones

Year group	School zone	Classrooms		Entrance / Exit to school	Stairwell
7	Floor 2, MFL	7ADE	R2056	Back yard into the Art/Music corridor	At the end of Art/Music corridor
		7BWI	R2049		
		7DAL	R2057		
		7GJA	R2050		
		7IMA	R2051		
		7JKI	R2052		
		7KRO	R2058		
8	Floor 2, Science	8GDO (7SLE)	R2009	Front of school - Technology Entrance	Technology
		8HCA	R2013		
		8LMA (7AWI)	R2007		
		8LWT	R2012		
		8MHO	R2019		
		8NMC (7ASA)	R2004		
		8RIV(7JMC)	R2008		
9	Floor 1, English	9AHM	R1035	Back yard next to the PE office	Main corridor rear stairwell
		9BPE	R1048		
		9CHA	R1053		
		9JBR	R1052		
		9JBU	R1047		
		9JMU	R1036		
		9WDA (8ADE)	R1046		
10	Top Floor, Humanities	10CFI	R3017	Main Entrance	By main entrance
		10JAL	R3016		
		10LCM	R3013		
		10PBA	R3012		
		10RFO (9AFR)	R3009		
		10SHR	R3015		
11	Top Floor, Maths	11ABR	R3003	Main Entrance	By main entrance
		11DCR	R3005		
		11EMR	R3004		
		11JKE	R3008		
		11NWI	R3021		
12/13	Whole school	12AMU	R1034	Community Entrance	Main corridor rear stairwell (for those not on ground floor)
		12JGO	R2021		
		12PRO	R2022		
		13AFI	R3007		
		13AWN	RG060		
		13HWA	Library		