

Our Ref: SW/NC  
19<sup>th</sup> July 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

As we approach the end of the school year I wanted to take the opportunity to thank you for your support through a difficult year. I think we have all been affected by Covid in one way or another and having support from parents has really helped the Academy to operate this year. I would also like you to pass on my thanks to your children for the way they have adapted to the restrictions in place this year, with bubbles, staggered starts and finishes to school and of course face coverings. They have been fantastic ambassadors for the school, and for you as their parents and we do appreciate their efforts.

We have learnt a great deal during this pandemic and as a result we intend to keep some features that have been in place this year, including split lunch times and a one way system. We will communicate these arrangements with students in September, however, I am pleased to inform you that we will be reverting to a much more 'normal' way of operating from September 2021, and following advice from the Department for Education I can confirm the following at this time:

- **Staggered starts and ends to the school day will no longer operate.** We will revert back to the school day beginning at 8.40am with a 3.30pm finish on Monday to Thursday, and a 2.45 finish on Friday. This will be for **all** students.
- **Bubbles will no longer be in effect.** Students will be able to move around the Academy site as normal.
- **Face Masks do not need to be worn in school.** The wearing of face masks is a personal choice, and those students who wish to can do so.
- **Face Masks must be worn on school transport.** This includes on Garnetts Coaches and our own Academy Minibuses until further notice.
- **The Academy will no longer identify close contacts of positive cases.** This will be done by NHS Track and Trace.
- **Students who are under 18 Years and 4 months, and are identified by the NHS Track and Trace Team will not need to self-isolate, but will be advised to take a PCR Test.** If this is positive, the student will need to isolate for 10 days
- **Students over 18 Years and 4 months will be treated as adults.** They will have had the opportunity to have receive both vaccinations by this time. If they have not done this they will need to self-isolate if contacted by NHS Track and Trace.

Please be aware that while we intend to implement the above measures, **it may be that we will need to 'step up' these measures in the case of an outbreak within the Academy.** We would do this in order to safeguard students and staff, and will do so in consultation with the Director for Public Health. We will obviously communicate any changes to you as soon as possible. Schools will also have to reintroduce mass testing when students return to school in September, with students undertaking 2 lateral flow tests across the first 2 weeks of term. In order that Year 11-13 do not miss any more teaching time

Acting Headteacher: **Mr S Whitehead BA NPQH**

Academy Trust registered company name trading as: **King James I Academy, Bishop Auckland**

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A company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales under company registration number: 7638979

Charity Registration Number: 527392



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during their exam years, we will require them to attend school briefly on Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> August in order that they can take their first test. We will also require Year 10 to attend briefly during the afternoon of Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> September for their tests. For this reason, we will operate a staggered start to the term. Students will need to come in to school for their tests as follows:

| Date                                | Year Group for Testing | Timings               | Other information                                                       |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Tuesday 31 <sup>st</sup> August     | <b>11</b>              | 9.30am – 11.30am      | Students to leave the site following their test                         |
|                                     | <b>12, 13</b>          | 12.30pm – 2.30pm      |                                                                         |
| Wednesday 1 <sup>st</sup> September | <b>10</b>              | 1.30pm – 3.30pm       | Students to leave the site following their test.                        |
| Thursday 2 <sup>nd</sup> September  | <b>7, 8</b>            | During the School Day | All students in Year 7, 8, 10, 11, 12 and 13 to attend school as normal |
| Friday 3 <sup>rd</sup> September    | <b>9</b>               | During the School Day | All Year groups to attend school as normal                              |

**\*\*Please note that Year 9 will not return to school until Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> September, with all other Year groups returning to teaching on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> September**

Whilst we have consent forms for the majority of parents, we will contact those parents who we do not yet have testing consent for, including new Year 7 starters later in the summer. We will also send a reminder and confirm timings later in August. After students have had 2 tests in school they will be provided with home testing kits to continue with through September.

In addition to the testing regime, the Academy will maintain hand sanitizing facilities in all classrooms, as well as maintaining appropriate ventilation and cleaning regimes through the day.

Please note that **parents should not send their children into school if they have any symptoms of Covid-19, no matter how mild.** At present, official symptoms are as follows:

- A high temperature
- A new or continuous cough – this means coughing a lot, for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours
- A loss or change to sense of smell or taste – this means they cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

Whilst this information in this letter is correct at the time of writing, please be aware that Government guidance may change during the summer holidays and plans may need to be adjusted accordingly. We will communicate any changes to you when we hear about them.

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Finally, I would like to thank you all again for your support, and wish you all a very enjoyable summer. Please stay safe, and we look forward to working with you again in September.

Yours faithfully

Simon Whitehead  
Headteacher



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