

25<sup>th</sup> September 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

### **Our 'new normal'**

I am so proud of how quickly our students have settled back into academy life and how keenly they are applying themselves to their studies. There is a real sense of warmth, determination and scholarship in the school. Thank you for your support in bringing this about.

This week, I had the pleasure of meeting the students in each year group who have earned the most Pimlico Points to date. They were unanimous in their excitement and optimism about resuming their learning. Now that term is up and running, we are able to review some of our routines and reintroduce some of the most popular aspects of academy life, such as the Extended Day. At the forefront of our mind, is the need to balance the effective delivery of education against the need to ensure a Covid-secure environment for students and staff. Please find below the details of some of the changes that we are making.

#### **Return to normal start times**

From Monday 5<sup>th</sup> October, we will be moving Tutor Time for Year 9, Year 10 and the Sixth Form to the start of the day. This means that all students will arrive at the academy from 08:00, to be lined up in the playground by 08:25 for a prompt 08:30 start. Social distancing will still be maintained during arrival and students will line-up in specific year group zones. The Sixth Form will enter through reception and head directly to the Sixth Form area, rather than lining up. On Mondays to Thursdays, the academy day will finish at 15:00 for all students, except those involved in the Extended Day or intervention. On Fridays, there will be a staggered dismissal between 15:00 and 15:10 for all year groups.

#### **The Extended Day – Year 7 and Year 8**

From Monday 5<sup>th</sup> October, we will be launching the Extended Day for all students in Year 7 and Year 8. This exciting programme of co-curricular enrichment activities aims to develop good character, confidence and cultural capital. Students' attendance is compulsory on their year group's respective days. For Year 7, the Extended Day will run from 15:00 to 16:00 on Mondays to Thursdays. Across these days, students will attend music sessions, sport sessions, a study session and a co-curricular club. For Year 8, the Extended Day will run from 15:00 to 16:00 on Mondays and Tuesdays. Across these days, students will attend a sport session and a co-curricular club. After half term, we hope to introduce additional clubs and co-curricular activities for other year groups.

#### **Academic Intervention – Year 11**

From Monday 5<sup>th</sup> October, we will be launching Academic Intervention for all students in Year 11. This is a personalised programme of subject-specific support, delivered by students' normal class teachers. Academic Intervention will run from 15:00 to 16:00 on Mondays to Thursdays. Teachers will decide which students should attend each week, based on the students' current academic performance in class. Some students will also be directed to attend study sessions. If selected, students' attendance at intervention and study sessions is compulsory. Students who are not selected to attend will leave at the normal time of 15:00.

### Assessment Weeks

To maximise the time that students have available to learn new knowledge in class, we are streamlining the academy's assessment calendar. Students in Years 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12 will sit one set of formal assessments at the end of the year. In addition, all students will complete regular knowledge-based assessments in class and will receive regular feedback from their teachers. Students in Years 11 and 13 will sit two sets of formal assessments throughout the year. Year 13 have already completed their first set of assessments. Year 11 will be completing their first set of assessments in the weeks commencing 12<sup>th</sup> October and 19<sup>th</sup> October. To free up some additional revision time for students, Academic Intervention will not run during formal assessment weeks and students will be dismissed from school directly after their afternoon exams.

### Face masks

From Monday 28<sup>th</sup> September, we are recommending, although not mandating, that staff and students wear face masks in corridors. If students do choose to wear a face mask, it must be worn properly, covering both the nose and mouth, and it must be removed in lessons. Students can choose to wear a disposal mask or a reusable mask, but the latter should be plain coloured and not overly-styled.

### Contingency planning for a move to Tier 2

Although a decision is not expected imminently, it is prudent for the academy to prepare for any potential move to Tier 2 coronavirus restrictions. Such a move would require secondary schools to operate a rota system, with half of students attending each week. Full-time on-site provision would still be made available to vulnerable children and the children of critical workers. Primary schools would remain open to all pupils.

In the event of a move to Tier 2, we will operate a 'week in, week out' model for each year group. For the year groups in school, students will follow their normal timetables, attending face-to-face lessons with their normal teachers in their normal rooms. For students studying at home, live lessons will take place remotely via Microsoft Teams.

To prepare for remote learning via Microsoft Teams, the academy will be teaching all students how to use the software and how to stay safe online. To access lessons remotely, students will need access to a computer and the internet during normal school hours every day. We appreciate that some families will not currently be able to provide this facility, especially if they have more than one child. In such circumstances, the academy will support in making alternative arrangements. To help inform our preparations, if you have not already done so, please complete this short survey <https://tinyurl.com/PA-laptop-survey>. If you have difficulty accessing the survey or have any related questions, please contact the academy's reception.

### Preparing for the winter

With wintry weather on the horizon, please ensure that you child brings a suitably warm overcoat to school each day. This should be navy blue or black, with only discreet logos, and should be worn over the blazer. If students choose to wear a hat, gloves or scarf, these should also be navy blue or black.

Yours faithfully,



Mr. D Smith  
Principal