

14th July 2020

Dear parent/carer,

Firstly, it has been a most difficult year for all of us. We have all learned new words and phrases like Social Distancing and self-isolation. Some of you may have experienced tragic events, and our hearts go out to you. We also know that children and young people have experienced great challenges, including missing their friends and learning at home. We also know that upwards of 80% of them have admitted to missing school. I would like to thank you all for working with your children at home – some of the work that has been submitted has been of an extremely high standard. As a school we have tried to be as supportive as possible during the crisis and from September we are in a position to open fully for all of our students and resume our Golden Hour model for teaching and learning.

It is the intention of Aspire to reopen on Wednesday September 2nd for Year 7 and Year 11 students so that our new students get a day in their new school only one other before the other year groups arrive. On the Thursday we will be open for all year groups as we welcome back Years 8, 9 and 10 as well. The first few days of term will be set aside to guide the students in the new routines and help them to get used to the new arrangements that will be in place until the Government indicates otherwise.

However, in September the days will be staggered and there will be different entrance and exits for the students. Specific details about our arrangements are at the end of this letter. In addition, students will be allocated specific classrooms which they stay in for most of the day. This will not help with their daily step count but will mean they should always get to lesson on time! This is to enable school to follow the government guidance which indicates students should stay in year group bubbles in secondary schools. They will also have breaks and lunch in these bubbles in specific areas. **It is vital that they stay in these areas at all times.** Indeed, repeated breaking of these rules will lead to a sanction, although we would hope most students understand the importance of the bubble. Excellent behaviour is vital at all times both in class and around the Academy. The idea is by staying in the bubble we reduce the risk of infection. The risk is still there, and we may have to close year groups if a number of infections occur. However, by using the bubble approach this risk can be reduced. All evidence indicates that the risks of contracting Corona Virus are less for children than adults. However, we are **absolutely encouraging students to keep their distance from each other as much as possible, although this won't be possible in the classroom.** Measures like repeated hand washing and use of tissues for coughing and sneezing will be vital. In addition, students should not come anywhere near school if they have any symptoms of COVID at all. This is also very important as any student who develops symptoms during the school day will need to wear a protective mask before being sent home. **For this reason, we ask you to always have your mobile on during school hours and ensure the details the school holds are accurate. We must have 2 up to date contacts for each child on our system to maintain our safeguarding protocols.**

We are planning to teach students the full curriculum and each lesson will be taught by subject specialists. We look forward to helping our students 'build back better' and get them learning and progressing to the best of their ability. Teachers will assess what the best approach is for each of them, so that they can all be 'the best

they can be'. All our staff have used the last term to examine the best schemes of work and sequence of learning for our students. Our staff are really looking forward to welcoming students back to school.

At Aspire we have completed a thorough risk assessment. These very detailed documents look to minimise risks, although no school can guarantee no risk whatsoever. These risk assessments include things like zoning, enhanced cleaning, increased availability of sanitisers, toilet protocols and strict social distancing. The list is extensive and the risk assessment is available on request. In addition, FCAT has a team of 2 colleagues who visit each fortnight to check the risk assessment is being followed. Your son/daughter will help with that process by being in the right place, at the right distance, at the right time.

Lunch and break arrangements have been carefully considered. Details are included here. KS3 students will have their lunch first on a rolling program.

Year 7, 8 and 9 will have a 30 minute lunchbreak from 12.55pm to 1.25pm. Year 7 will have 15 minutes in the canteen followed by 15 minutes of outdoor play, whilst year 8 will have their outdoor play first before having their 15 minutes in the canteen. Year 9 will have their lunch in the sports hall before having their outdoor play. Each day the year groups will swap the order so that a different year group goes first and a different year group eats in the sports hall.

Years 10 and 11 will also have a 30 minute lunchbreak from 1.30pm to 2.00pm with one group eating whilst others are on the yard before swapping over.

We will also be providing additional support for our young people to help with their wellbeing. Some of our students may have found the recent months difficult, whilst others may have learned new skills. Either way we are here to support them to the best of our ability. This extra support will be available during form time in the morning.

In terms of equipment students should bring their own, although we may be able to assist with this at the start of the year with packs for those students who require them. **On the day(s) that students have PE they will wear their full aspire PE kit all day. Other than that, we will be expecting full uniform.** Practical PE will begin from Monday 7th September.

You will have read in the press about the government mentioning use of fines for non-attendance. Aspire may well look at this at a future date, but our opening position is to welcome students back and work with families to help with good attendance. Clearly, after all the school that has been missed it is vital that all students attend school as often as possible. Punctuality is also extremely important and we expect all students to arrive on time. For those students that travel to school on public transport the council have confirmed that it is increasing the capacity on buses so this should not be a barrier to students arriving on time.

In conclusion, we have looked to support you to the best of our ability in lockdown and now we are very pleased to welcome students back. We reassure you that we have spent considerable thought and time on ensuring Aspire Academy is as safe as possible. Specific arrangements are at the end of this letter, but we look forward to seeing you in September.

Yours faithfully,

John Woods

Headteacher

Further Information

Return dates

Year 7 and 11 will start back on Wednesday 2nd September

Year's 8, 9 and 10 will return on Thursday 3rd September

Timings are as follows

Start and finish times

To ensure that each year group is kept apart in 'bubbles' the school day will have two staggered start and finish times.

KS3 (years 7, 8 and 9) will arrive first at 8.25am for an 8.30am start. It is important that students do not arrive too early and congregate outside. Year 7 will line up on the top yard in front of the Poulton doors having arrived via the staff entrance. (Parents can drop their children off at the entrance but will not be allowed into school). Year 8 will arrive via Play Football and line up on the bottom yard (they are already used to doing this). Year 9 will enter via the wooden gate and line up in front of Thornton doors.

If the weather is inclement year 7 will assemble in the canteen, year 8/11 in the sports hall and year 9/10 in the drama studio.

KS4 will arrive at 8.55am for a 9.00am start. Year 10 will line up on the top yard in front of the Thornton doors having arrived via the wooden gate. Year 11 will arrive via Play Football and line up on the bottom yard.

Breakfast club

KS3 - Year 7 breakfast (toast only) will be in the main canteen from 8.10am. Years 8 and 9 will have access to a grab and go stall at the SPH (8) and the Thornton stairwell (9) from 8.10am.

KS4 – Years 10 and 11 will have access to a grab and go stall at the SPH (11) and the Thornton stairwell (10).

The school day

Year's 7, 8 and 9		Year's 10 and 11	
Time	Activity	Time	Activity
8.30am – 8.45am	Form	9.00am -9.15am	Form
8.45am -9.45am	P1	9.15am – 10.15am	P1
9.45am – 10.45am	P2	10.15am -11.15am	P2
10.45am – 11.00am	Break*	11.15am – 11.30am	Break
11.00am – 12.00noon	P3	11.30am – 12.30pm	P3
12.00noon-12.55pm	P4	12.30pm – 1.30pm	P4
12.55pm -1.25pm	Lunch**	1.30pm – 2.00pm	Lunch
1.30pm -2.30pm	P5	2.00pm – 3.00pm	P5
2.30pm	Depart	3.00pm	Depart

There is a 5 minute transition period between lunch sittings.

*for the first 2.5 weeks break will be taken in the classroom by x2 of the 3 KS3 year groups with the other year group be allowed outside. This will rotate so every 3 days a year group goes outside. A biscuit and a drink will be delivered by the canteen staff to the two year groups that remain in their classrooms. The same premise applies in KS4 with each year group taking it in turns to have a breaktime outside.

**the first lunch sitting has 3 year groups. On a rolling program Year 7, 8 and 9 will take it in turns to have their lunch in the sports hall – trolleys with grab bags will be available in the sports hall. Outdoor play will take place for this year group on the bottom yard. The other two year groups will have 15 minutes outdoor play on the yard whilst the other year group eats inside – all hot food will be grab and go e.g. chicken burgers, pasta king etc. then they will swap over. This will be reviewed after the first 2.5 weeks.

The second sitting will have 15 minutes outside followed by 15 minutes inside and vice versa.

Zones

In order to maintain the integrity of the year group bubbles each year group will be housed in a particular zone in the school. The classrooms that make up each zone will only be used for that year group.

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
Rooms	B8, B9, B10, B11, B13, C15, C16,	B1 – B7	C8 – C14	A3, 4, 5, 6 7,	C1-C7