



Montgomery Academy

An Academy within the Fylde Coast Academy Trust

Exec. Headteacher: Mr S. M. Bullen BA NPQH & MEd

Headteacher: Mr S. Careless BSc MSc NPQH

Senior Deputy Headteacher: Mrs C. Montgomery BSc MSc NPQSL

e-mail: admin@montgomery.fcat.org.uk

Web: www.montgomeryschool.co.uk

All Hallows Road
Bispham
Blackpool
FY2 0AZ

Tel: 01253 356271

Fax: 01253 352305

Inspiring Excellence Together

29th August 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

I am writing for hopefully the last time, before the start of term next week, with an update on new guidance released in the past week, some reminders and to reassure you about the measures we have taken to make Montgomery Academy a safe place to learn and work.

Firstly, a reminder of start days and times for each year group

Year 7

Start on **Wednesday 2nd September at 8:30** and will enter through the **Bike Sheds Gate and finish at 2:45**

Year 8

Start on **Friday 4th September at 9:00** and will enter through the **Bike Sheds Gate and finish at 3:15**

Year 9

Start on **Thursday 3rd September at 8:45** and will enter through the **Science Arches Gate and finish at 3:00**. They are then not in on Friday 4th, but return on Monday 7th at the same time and gate.

Year 10

Start on **Friday 4th September at 9:00** and will enter through the **Science Arches Gate and finish at 3:15**

Year 11

Start on **Thursday 3rd September at 8:30** and will enter through the **Science Arches Gate and finish at 2:45**. They are then not in on Friday 4th, but return on Monday 7th at the same time and gate.

Face Coverings

I am sure you will have seen the debate in the news about whether secondary age students in England should wear face coverings in communal areas, following Scotland's decision at the start of last week. England did then change its guidance and FCAT took a decision that they would adopt the wearing of face coverings in all communal areas for all FCAT Secondary students across Blackpool and Garstang. The FCAT statement on this decision is available on FCAT's and Montgomery's website.

<https://fcat.org.uk/fcat-statement-27th-august-2020>

For students at Montgomery, this means that students will need to wear face coverings when they are inside the school building and

- Entering the school
- Exiting the school
- Moving between lessons or to the toilet facilities
- Moving to or from the dining Halls for break or lunch AND queuing for their food inside the dining hall
- Moving to or from assembly

They should not wear their face coverings when they are

- Outside
- Sat down in class
- Sat at a table in the dining hall
- Sat down in assembly

We have also made the decision that face coverings cannot be anything but a face mask and we will supply each student 2 or 3 reusable and washable face masks. This will mean that all students are wearing the same black plain mask. We have ordered these for delivery at the end of next week and have a supply of disposable ones that we will supply for students until the order arrives. Students will also be given a sealable plastic bag to store their masks in. Giving students more than one means that they can be washed regularly. Any student who subsequently fails to bring their mask in will be given a disposable one for the day. If students were to lose all of their masks then they would need to be replaced by a plain black face mask, and students should see these now as part of their uniform. Students that have a specific valid medical reason for not wearing a face mask will be issued a card by the Student Support Centre, though please note the use of face masks are still recommended for sufferers of Asthma unless their condition is severe.

Safety first

The decision on face coverings, as all that have been made regarding a full re-opening, is putting the safety of all the Montgomery Family first. This will take a while to get used to for both students and staff. The BBC have produced a useful video regarding safety in schools. The link is here

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/education-53919766>



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We are reducing our assemblies to half populations and as already explained in previous letters we have already decided to

- Stagger start times, finish times, breaks and lunches to avoid year groups mixing
- Restrict each year group's classes to one block of the school

This follows the government guidance that students should be kept in a year group 'bubble'. Students **will** be mixing within their year group bubble at breaks, lunches and in their lessons.

We have also reduced the number of year groups that each member of staff is working with to a maximum of three except for a few members of staff, such as SLT and our SENDCO for who this is not possible. All staff will maintain social distancing from students except in corridors at lesson changeovers where face coverings will be worn. This has meant that some Progress Tutors have had to change until it is safe enough to return to our original timetable and working practices. The revised list of tutors and their new form bases is available on our website on a document called 'Pastoral staffing 2020-2021 in the Information/Letters & Documents section.

Equipment

Obviously, the sharing of equipment is a concern for us and it would help us a lot if you could ensure that your son or daughter has basic equipment such as pen, pencil, ruler, eraser, a calculator and they have a pencil case to keep all these items in. We will be able to loan a small amount of equipment and we will supply green pens for self-marking work and possibly mini-whiteboard pens but these will soon get lost unless students have a pencil case and a school bag to keep them in. Loaned equipment will need to be cleaned before reuse so if every student is organised with their equipment it will benefit everyone.

Guidance on local lockdown measures

New guidance was published on Friday evening regarding what should happen if:

- There is a confirmed positive case of the coronavirus amongst the school community
- Local infection rates increase to a point that there is a localised lockdown in the area

These measures may include students and staff who have been in close contact with the confirmed case being moved to remote learning for a period of time. In the case of local lockdowns, students may be put on a rota of time in school and time working remotely to reduce the number of interactions in the local area. We will digest this guidance in the coming week and put contingency plans in place for such occurrences.

Eating and Parent Pay

Chartwells have designed a new menu for the start of term that will make the service a more grab & go style and reduce queue times, though the staggered breaks and lunches will reduce numbers in the dining halls. This is in the process of being put on our website. Students of course can bring their own food. Students will be expected to sanitise their hands when they enter the dining hall, which means we intend to still use the biometric system using fingerprints. We are looking to go to a cashless system, where students do not use the revalve machines to put money on to their account. Please can you put money on your son or daughter's ParentPay accounts before their first day of term. Year 7 students will receive letters on the first day on how to access their new ParentPay account and school will fund their lunch on the first few days to give parents time to set up and credit their accounts. This will not be required for students that are registered for Free School Meals. If you are the parent of a Year 8-11 student and are having problems accessing your ParentPay account, then please contact us next week.

The next few weeks is going to be a steep learning curve for both staff and students as we adapt together to new expectations and ways of working. It will quickly become evident that some things that we have planned will need refining or changing completely when we have seen how they work when we have almost 1200 students back again. Students are adaptable and resilient and we will support them in the 'new normal'. Safety will come first, though the sooner we can get everyone back learning again the better for all. We will acknowledge the fact that the last six months has been difficult in many ways for everyone, but we see this as an opportunity to come back even stronger as a place of learning, enjoyment and personal development.

We look forward to working with you again in 'Inspiring Excellence Together'.

Yours sincerely,



Mr Careless
Headteacher
Montgomery Academy