



Montgomery Academy

within the Fylde Coast Academy Trust

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Inspiring Excellence Together

Dear Parent/Carer,

I am writing to you to explain what is planned for September as Montgomery opens to all year groups. The guidance for secondary schools re-opening was published just over a week ago and we have been working hard planning for how we implement the guidance to enable a full reopening to all students in as safe as manner as possible. The 35-page guidance is available on the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

The prevalence of coronavirus (COVID-19) has decreased, the NHS Test and Trace system is up and running, and there is clear guidance about the measures that need to be in place to create safer environments within schools.

Returning to school is vital for children's education and for their wellbeing. Time out of school is detrimental for children's cognitive and academic development. This impact can affect both current levels of learning and children's future ability to learn, and therefore we need to ensure all pupils can return to school sooner rather than later. We are looking forward to helping our students 'bounce back better' and get them learning and making progress to the best of their ability.

The main themes of our plan involve enhanced cleaning throughout the day, strict rules on hygiene and social distancing and finally, year groups working in bubbles as 5 'mini-schools' that never meet during the school day. The overarching principle is to reduce the number of contacts between children and staff. This will be achieved through keeping year groups in separate 'bubbles' and through maintaining distance between individuals. Year groups will have all their lessons, except PE in the same blocks, with staff moving between blocks to facilitate the delivery of the curriculum.

All staff will be working with a maximum of 3 year groups out of 5 and will maintain social distancing, in all but exceptional circumstances. This may mean that they do not have their usual teacher. To avoid cross-contamination of year group bubbles, staff will be keeping a 2m distance from students as much as possible and please encourage your son/daughter to do the same 2m from staff. How we deliver both PE and Music will be clarified at the start of the Autumn term, though we are currently thinking that one of the PE lessons a week for years 7, 8 and 9 will be a theory lesson.

To achieve the separation of year groups we are introducing a staggered school day as follows:

Years 7 & 11 start at 8:30 and finish at 2:45pm
Years 8 & 10 start at 9:00am and finish at 3:15pm
Year 9 start at 8:45am and finish at 3:00pm

This will mean that students will not be arriving or leaving at the same time and again reduce mixing of year groups. Breaks and lunches will also be staggered, so that only two year groups will be on a break at any one time and they will be in separate dining halls and different outside areas. **It is vital that they stay in these areas at all times.**

As students will be working solely in one of the five blocks in the school, access to specialist teaching rooms, such as expressive arts, will not always be possible. There will have to be some compromises as to how certain practical subjects are delivered. This could mean that the focus would be on theory until it is considered safe to move back to the normal timetable. Please could we ask any students that were loaned a laptop by the SSC before lockdown, to return them in September as we will need them as ICT provision for the delivery of the curriculum. We have had to re-write the timetable in a week, yet we have been able to maintain a broad and balanced curriculum offer.

This is going to take some getting used to for both the students and the staff. Therefore, we are going to start the students in the following way in September allowing us to introduce the students to the new ways of working and moving around the site:

Tuesday	September 1st – Staff Training day (no students on site)
Wednesday	September 2nd – Year 7 students only
Thursday	September 3rd – Year 7, 9 and 11 only
Friday	September 4th – Years 7,8 and 10 only
Monday	September 7th – All students

As we did with returning Year 10 students, we will go through the revised behaviour policy including a new C5 consequence for unsafe or upsetting behaviour related to Covid-19. We will also discuss when and where students will either wash or sanitise their hands using our 60+ dispensers around the school. The majority of our existing behaviour and rewards system will operate as normal. Our expectations in terms of uniform in September will be our usual high standards. Therefore, hair and nails should not be coloured an unnatural colour, otherwise students will risk being confined to isolation. We are also tightening our expectations on headphones/earphones. Any student seen with headphones/earphones during school time will be asked to hand them over and they will not get them back that day; so please speak to your son/daughter to ensure that we can avoid this situation.

You will be aware that students who use public transport will be expected to wear a face covering on the bus or tram. Face masks can be bought on the bus for £1, though we will need to go through how they store their mask or covering during the school day. Please check the Blackpool Transport website for more information and updates at www.blackpooltransport.com

Students are encouraged to either walk to school or cycle if they can. Please can I remind you that students are responsible for locking their bikes and cycles are left at school at their own risk.



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The Academy is updating the Risk Assessment written for the wider reopening of schools in June in preparation for a full opening in September. This Risk Assessment should be published and available on our website from the end of this week. If you are anxious regarding your son or daughter returning in September, I suggest you have a look to see the lengths we are going to, to ensure risks are minimised. I will take this opportunity to remind you that if your child shows symptoms such as a high temperature, a persistent cough or a loss of taste or smell **then they should stay at home and are advised to get tested**. If students display symptoms in school then they will be isolated and sent home. **For that reason, we ask you to always have your mobile on during school hours and ensure the details the school holds are accurate**. The risk assessment also gives advice for families where they have extremely clinically vulnerable members of their household. Please contact us if you are unsure about the guidance.

You will have read in the press about the government mentioning use of fines for non-attendance. The Academy may well look at this at some point, but the initial opening position is to welcome students back, working with families to help with good attendance. This has always been a good principle, as we seek to continue to build excellent relationships between the school and families.

All students with asthma who will require their inhaler during the school day should ensure they have their inhaler in their school bags or a pocket at all times. If students forget or misplace their inhaler, they should inform their class teacher or Progress/Pastoral Manager immediately in order for parents/carers to be informed so that they can bring it into school should it have been forgotten. Students will be loaned pens if they need them in the Autumn term, but it will help everyone if they are organised with their equipment, which they must not share with their friends. The necessity of not sharing equipment between year group bubbles means that it is even more important that each child has a calculator in their bag at all times.

We are saying goodbye to a few staff at the end of this term. Mrs Edwards has been with us this year working in Maths. Mr Corbley has been with us for 18 months and is going on to a promoted post as Head of MFL. Miss Brooks has been with us working as an SSA, supporting students with Maths for the last five years and is going on to train as a teacher. We are saying goodbye to Miss Madej, who has been battling ill health for the last three years. Thankfully, she is currently very well but for her long-term health has decided to take early retirement. Her presence, humour and skills will be sorely missed in the Technology block and we wish her a happy retirement. Mrs Bunker has been with us for 26 years and is one of the longest serving members of staff. She has been amazing as our lead for Transition and is a positive influence on both her students and colleagues. Many, many students have benefitted from a very smooth transition to Montgomery because of her. We wish her all the best, as she also goes on to a promoted post as Head of MFL at Armfield Academy.

Another colleague that will not be with us next year, as such, will be Mr Bullen who has been appointed FCAT Acting Director of Education next year. We wish him well in his new post and thank him for his

constant support over the last 4 years as Executive Headteacher. Stephen Cox, Executive Headteacher of Garstang will be joining us 2 days a week from September. He has experience of headship in 2 schools and is looking forward to working at Montgomery.

As I conclude this letter, I think that it is worth reviewing what has been happening over this last half-term, despite being open for children of keyworkers and Year 10 students only. We have provided provision for up to 50 children of keyworkers all the way through, what will be 17 weeks of lockdown at the end of the term. 48% of our Year 10 students have attended over the last 5 weeks, which is one of the highest in Blackpool. 53% of our Year 7, 8 and 9 students have attended a face-to-face academic/pastoral review in school over the last 2 weeks; setting targets about preparation for the new academic year. Montgomery has just come 9th out of 501 schools nationally for our engagement in the Seneca online learning platform and 73rd out of 1750 schools for our students' work on Hegarty Maths.

Year 10 students work packs have been collated for collection and we will endeavour to get them to students before the summer even if we have to post or deliver them. Some of the work in these packs is optional extension work for those who are up to date with the other remote learning and other work is catch-up work for students who have not been regularly engaging in their remote learning over lockdown.

I am very proud of what the staff have been able to offer in terms of remote learning, provision for keyworkers and vulnerable students, Year 10 face-to-face lessons, Y7-9 face-to-face meetings, food parcels for our families most in need, wraparound pastoral care and the organisation of the National Food Vouchers.

The Autumn term will be a new challenge we will rise to, though my staff are in need of a rest, having worked 21 weeks in unprecedented circumstances without a break. The Academy site will be closed for the first three weeks of the summer holiday. There will also be no response regarding online/remote work from teaching staff over the summer period.

From all the staff at Montgomery, we hope you have a very good and very safe summer break. We will see you in September and are looking forward to continuing to 'Inspire Excellence Together' with you in whatever new normalities lie ahead.

Regards
Mr. Careless