

15<sup>th</sup> October 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

I am writing to update you on events at the Academy this half term and to add a few key reminders for the next half term.

Firstly, I must thank you all for your support in what could have been a very difficult period for the Academy and its students. I have been overwhelmed by the support, kindness and sense of community we have felt since the start of term and I am also extremely proud of the positivity and resilience our students have shown. They have returned after an unprecedented amount of time off school and have been willing to quickly adapt to new rules, ready to behave excellently and keen to learn. This attitude has been clearly felt by everyone in school and has been a definite positive from a pretty awful situation for the students concerned.

Overall, the measures we have taken as an Academy to keep students and staff safe have been successful. As you will know, two weeks ago we had to send a group of year 10 students home to self-isolate but thankfully we were able to avoid sending the whole year group or students from other year groups home too. We have also been able to use Microsoft Teams to deliver a large number of live online lessons to those at home and have supplemented this with work set on Show My Homework. This has meant that those students who have been isolating have accessed the exact same work that their peers in school were working on. We have made the best of a less than ideal situation and I would like to specifically thank the staff who worked on setting up this high-quality provision but also the parents and carers of those students who were affected for their kindness and help during this difficult period for their families. We were thrilled to welcome them all back on Tuesday of this week.

I sincerely hope that we do not need to ask other groups to isolate in the future, but it is something we must be prepared for in the current climate. In any future case, as with this previous one, we will take all advice provided from the relevant authorities and will, in the first instance, only contact those who need to self-isolate as a matter of priority. We will then inform all other parents of the situation via our official social media pages and text messages or letters as soon as we are able to which may be the following day depending on when the news of a positive test comes into the Academy. Please do rest assured that we are taking every precaution we can in school to ensure any impact is kept to a minimum whilst also balancing this with the need for our students to be well educated and supported. Please also be assured that should your child need to be isolated, we will have a full and thorough programme of home education, including live lessons with their teachers, ready to go within a day of the isolation being communicated.

As we continuously look at ways to improve how we communicate with you as parents and carers, I wanted to let you know it is our intention to move our main method of communication with you to email. The reason for this is we are restricted to the length of text messages that we send and by using emails we will be able to easily provide more detailed information and attachments directly to your inbox. If we do not have an email address for you, or it has changed recently please let us know asap so that we can update this on our system by emailing [parentportal@tscacademy.org.uk](mailto:parentportal@tscacademy.org.uk). If you aren't sure which email we have for you this can be checked by logging into your Parent Portal account. We will of course continue to publish letters and other important information on our website and social media pages which I would encourage you to follow.

I am also pleased to let you know that following an update to our system, positive value points issued to students will be available for parents and carers to view on Parent Portal after the half term break.

Onto other matters, please can we ask for your support as parents and carers on a few key issues that we are striving to perfect on a daily basis:

- Covid safe measures – please can you discuss with your child at home the importance of following our no-touching policy, of hand washing or sanitising regularly and remind them of the three main Covid-19 symptoms (a new continuous cough, a high temperature and/or a loss of sense of taste or smell).
- Attendance – please be aware that students only need to self-isolate if they have been instructed by the Academy to do so, if they have been contacted by NHS Test and Trace and instructed to do so or if they display Covid-19 symptoms themselves. All other students should attend school as normal.
- Arrival at school - please ensure students arrive on time for their morning briefings but no earlier than 10 minutes before it is due to start. We will not allow access to the building until this time and would want students to avoid waiting outside in the cold and rain as the weather turns and we move towards winter.
- Uniform – in the main this is excellent but there is always room for improvement. In particular, can I ask for your support in ensuring jewellery is left at home and new piercings during term time are avoided. Please also ensure trousers are not skin tight as per our uniform guidelines.
- Sweets, chewing gum and energy drinks – these are not allowed in the Academy and will be confiscated to be collected at the end of the school day. Energy drinks that are not recommended for children will be confiscated and disposed of.

Given the changes to local restrictions across Nottinghamshire that have been announced this week, we will be reviewing our risk assessments and Covid-safe measures over the half term break and will let all parents know if there are any changes before the new half term begins. However, please do get in contact in the usual way if you have any questions or suggestions about anything in this letter and once again thank you for your support of the Academy in these tricky times.

### Message from our Chaplain

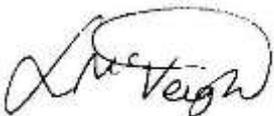
A long time ago when travel was permitted, and even encouraged, we had a family holiday to Ibiza. One day while we were sat overlooking the beach we decided to book ourselves onto a trip to Formentera. The next day we boarded the boat ready for our trip when we noticed that it was getting overcast and more than a little bit windy, we set sail and all was well until the boat we were on started rolling on the overgrowing waves. Eventually the pilot of our boat decided that we should turn back. By this time I was already feeling more than a little queasy, however I remembered a piece of advice from somewhere in the deep recess of my mind. Find a fixed point and concentrate on that, as it helps to stabilise your balance and prevent sickness.

Just like the storm I experienced, the ever-changing nature of life in 2020 means many are feeling disorientated and anxious. I want to encourage you to look for your fixed point. For many people it is faith that becomes the focus when everything else seems uncertain, it is faith that brings hope.

**Romans 15:13** “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.”

Finally, I hope you all have a safe and restful half term break as far as possible.

Yours faithfully



Lisa McVeigh  
Principal