

Lincoln Castle Academy



14th July 2020

Dear Parents & Carers,

Following the publication of the Government Guidance for Schools, I write to detail our plans to return all LCA students to full time education in September. This letter sets out measures to manage the risks associated with Covid-19 whilst allowing your child to resume his/her education in school.

The planning process has been extensive and builds on our experience during recent months. I have been humbled by the messages of support from our parents and call on you again to support what is a significant undertaking. Inevitably there are some compromises but I assure you decisions have been made in order to prioritise our core responsibility to educate through a broad and balanced curriculum whilst creating a safe environment in line with Government Guidance.

Lincoln Castle Academy, September 2020

The return to school will be carefully managed with students receiving step by step guidance and reassurance. We will stagger the start of term with year groups beginning on set days. The following information refers to the year group your child will be in *next academic year*:

	First day of term	Start Time	Departure Time	Zone
Year 7	Thursday, 3 rd September	8.30 am	3pm	Creative Arts
Year 8	Friday, 4 th September	8.45am	2.30pm	Maths
Year 9	Tuesday, 8 th September	9am	2.45pm	Humanities
Year 10	Monday, 7 th September	8.45am	2.45pm	English
Year 11	Tuesday, 8 th September	8.30am	3pm	Business & Enterprise
Year 12	Friday, 4 th September	8.30am	3pm	Common Room & Science
Year 13	Friday, 4 th September	8.30am	3pm	Mulder Suite & Science

The allocated arrival time reduces the number of potential interactions on the way to school and allows students' entry to the site to be carefully managed. On arrival, students will be greeted and they will wash their hands. Further scheduled hand washing will take place throughout the day.

All students will be grouped within a year group 'bubble' and prevented from mixing with students outside of their group. Each 'bubble' will be allocated a 'zone' within the school and will remain in their zone for the majority of their lessons; staff from all subjects will move to the students to teach their normal timetable. Students will only move *within their zone and within their bubble*, e.g. from their Year 9 tutor group to their Year 9 English class or to their designated washroom or recreation area.

Students will be assigned individual desks and in most classrooms, they will face the front of the room. Teachers' desks will be positioned 2 metres from students as per the guidance and staff will be discouraged from being in close proximity to students for extended periods of time.

On the first day back students should bring their own resources into school, including: pens, pencils, sharpener, ruler, rubber, highlighters and a scientific calculator (recommended model: Casio FX-83GTPlus/ Casio FX-85GTPlus). Every student will be issued with a large zip lock bag for their resources which will remain on their desk at school.

On occasion, students will be escorted to a different room on the school site to access specialist rooms and resources (e.g. Design Technology, Cooking, Physical Education). This will be limited and carefully planned with most lessons taking place in the year group 'zone.'

The school day will consist of five taught lessons, as well as tutor time which will be used for catch-up, mentorship and to deliver our Aspire Programme with important initial work centred on wellbeing and the 'recovery' curriculum. Lunch and a break time snack will be provided for those eligible for free school meals, but we ask that all other students **bring a packed lunch and a full bottle of water**. Unfortunately, we will not be able to provide hot food. Schools are not being reimbursed for additional costs as a result of the pandemic and catering staff will be redeployed to support supervision and our thorough cleaning programme.

End times will also be staggered, with the final lesson of the day (period 5) ending at 15 minute intervals for different year groups. Again, this reduces potential interaction between 'bubbles.' Students who travel by bus will be supervised until their bus arrives but all students will be expected to leave the site by 3pm to allow for staff briefings and for thorough cleaning to take place.

Reintegration Plans

Whilst we recognise all students will need support to adjust to these new ways of working, we appreciate the return to school may be particularly challenging for some students, including those with additional needs and challenging personal circumstances. A proactive approach will see modifications for individual students, including our SEND 'bubble', mentoring support, curriculum reduction or a phased return. These measures will be carefully planned and communicated to parents and students to ensure a successful return for all.

Conduct

Maintaining good discipline and an orderly environment is a necessary part of school life, but this will be of paramount importance in September as we work within new parameters. Whilst individual students will receive appropriate guidance and support, *deliberate* breaches of our safety measures will result in sanctions, including fixed term and, should the need arise, permanent exclusion. High levels of compliance are essential in order to keep our entire school community safe. There will be zero tolerance of mobile phone usage in school. I urge parents to reinforce this message before September to avoid witnessing the agony of teenager and mobile phone enforced separation.

Confirmed/ Suspected Case Covid-19

Students or staff with symptoms of coronavirus should not attend school and should follow 'stay at home: guidance for households' (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>) which sets out information about self-isolation and testing (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested>).

If an individual becomes ill during the school day they will be moved to our Medical Isolation Room until they can leave the site. This room, and all other relevant parts of the school, will be given a deep clean, including anti-viral fogging. Should an individual test positive, we will track those who may have been exposed through the 'bubble' and provide clear guidance.

Journeying to and from School

As a parent myself, I am acutely aware that the new school year brings additional anxiety and whilst I hope to provide reassurance, I must be open and honest regarding the scope of my control. This does not extend to school transport or the journey to and from school. Whilst we will provide clear guidance to all students, I ask you to stress your expectations to your child for their own safety.

Lincolnshire County Council is working with transport providers to ensure that children are able to travel to school as safely as possible at this time. The numbers of children travelling on each vehicle have been adjusted to support social distancing, the wearing of face coverings by pupils has been recommended (this is mandatory on public transport) and providers must frequently clean their vehicles.

LCC ask that children entitled to education transport continue to only use it where absolutely necessary and that parents and carers support them to follow all guidance and advice that is issued. We have requested further clarity on behalf of students who use school transport; we will ensure this is passed to you as soon as we have more information.

The end of term

If you have a question, a concern or personal circumstances you wish to make staff aware of, please get in touch. Our school website has many resources which may be of use to you and your child in preparing for the new academic which begins 3rd September (Year 7 only). Our Staff Inset days on 1st and 2nd September will be used to adjust plans further and respond to the latest guidance as necessary.

The school will close to all students on Friday 17th July at 3pm. As we approach the end of a truly unusual time, particular thanks must go to all our key worker parents for your professional and personal efforts during this time; for keeping us all safe and helping our community to function. Whilst this chapter is certainly not over and we prepare for what may lie ahead, I shall look back on this 4-month period with enormous pride. Our school community has pulled together and LCA staff have been remarkable. In the new academic year, we will return to what we do best; we will settle students into new routines, we will ensure lessons are rich and fulfilling and we will teach! Whilst much will feel different, the return to a school with students' laughter, learning and hard work will provide some eagerly awaited normality and we look forward to it.

In the meantime, thank you all for your support during this challenging time. I wish you and your family a restful happy restorative summer.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs Louise Laming