



## Autumn Term (1)

8<sup>th</sup> September 2020

Dear Parents & Carers,

Lincoln Castle Academy has been open to students for several days following the staggered start of term. I appreciate the return to school may have been an anxious time for families and I am therefore writing to provide the first of a series of regular updates.

Although we have spent many hours planning and adapting our procedures, we commit to ongoing reflection and to adapting as necessary. We recognise the trust you are placing in our staff to keep your child safe, to minimise risks and to educate your child.

### The term so far...

I am delighted to report students and staff have adapted well to the changes in place. Whilst these are still early days, the atmosphere in the academy has been focused and, as I anticipated, very uplifting. We have encountered relatively few issues and have been delighted to return to teaching and learning as we know it. We are particularly delighted to welcome 170 new Year 7 students into our academy.

The term began with 2 days of staff training. During this time, we explored ways to support students to adapt to the demands of the curriculum and return to the resilience, study habits and routines that they knew 6 months ago. In addition, staff received important health and safety training.

All schools have had to overcome challenges whilst minimising risks, usually without extra space, resources or funds. At LCA we are fortunate to have a large spacious site meaning year groups can remain entirely separate throughout the school day. Students do not encounter other year group 'bubbles' as they remain in their base. For that reason, masks are not typically required (but must be carried as a precaution) and can be used at the discretion of the individual. We have increased our cleaning team with the appointment of several new staff and the site is cleaned throughout the day, as well as at the end of the day.

### Looking ahead...

As always, we are grateful for your support; sending your child with a mask, accommodating our staggered start and end times and communicating with your child's tutor as necessary. As I've said before, the task in hand is challenging and depends upon a community effort. For that reason, I request your support in the following ways:

#### **1. Social Media**

These are testing times for all of us, including adolescents. Please refrain from using social media to raise issues or concerns. Instead, communicate with us direct. By keeping our public posts positive, professional and measured, we will minimise anxiety for our students and make it clear that the *adults at home and at school* are working together to keep them safe. Please avoid speculating about suspected cases of Covid-19. Should we have a confirmed case, I will contact all parents.

## **2. Timings**

As previously communicated, we cannot currently accommodate students outside of the designated start and end times. Some students are arriving 30 minutes early and congregating outside the school gates. Please avoid sending your child to school with lots of unsupervised time to spare. We appreciate this is not possible for those travelling by bus and have supervision in place at the end of the school day for these students.

## **3. Social distancing**

The current guidance advises children to maintain a distance of 1 metre or more from others at all times. Please reinforce this message, encouraging your child to be safe on the journey to and from school. Students should avoid touching others or sharing food.

## **4. Masks/face coverings on buses**

All students (other than those who are exempt) should be wearing a mask for the entire journey to and from school. Please reinforce this message with your child as some students have failed to do so. This measure helps keep students safe when 'bubbles' are in close proximity.

## Current Guidance

We are keeping up to date with all local Covid-19 updates, monitoring the information provided by parents, as well as liaising with our local Public Health England Protection Team. Should it be deemed necessary to 'close a bubble', this is most likely to impact one year group. Should this occur, the year group will be asked to remain at home for 14 days and their education will continue remotely. Individual students who are self-isolating will also receive remote education (further details to follow).

The latest advice regarding Covid-19 can be found using the link below which includes information on symptoms, self-isolation and testing:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

Finally, please get in touch should you need to. Whilst parents are currently unable to access the school site without prior appointment, effective communication remains a priority.

- Email your child's Tutor or Head of Year
- Email [enquiries@lincolncastleacademy.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@lincolncastleacademy.co.uk)
- Telephone Reception: 01522 529203
- Check the website & Facebook page for updates

Yours faithfully,

Mrs Laming  
Headteacher