

29th October 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope this letter reaches you and your families in strong health - body, mind and spirit.

I believe that most students have adapted well in returning to more traditional ways of learning and operating at the academy. Last academic year, the academy was set up and managed very differently due to our COVID-19 measures. Consequently, after my first half term as Principal during more 'normal circumstances', I have gained valuable insight into some key development areas for the academy, which will lead to key changes over the course of the academic year.

COVID-19 key control and safety measures

As you are probably aware from the media, COVID-19 cases have been increasing at a rate where our health services have started to experience returning strains and pressures. Therefore, we must prepare ourselves to enter a phase whereby we may have to re-introduce certain COVID-19 measures e.g. face coverings. For now, I wanted to reiterate the measures communicated at the start of the autumn term:

- Maintain good hygiene for everyone i.e. providing hand washing facilities and hand sanitiser, and encouraging "catch it, bin it, kill it"
- Maintain appropriate cleaning regimes i.e. regular cleaning in accordance with Government cleaning standards, with common touch points cleaned at least twice per day. We have continued with our additional cleaning across the two sites into this academic year
- Keep occupied spaces well ventilated
- Follow PHE advice on testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases of COVID-19
- Staff will continue to take 2 lateral flow tests weekly
- Students in Y7-13 will continue to take 2 lateral flow tests weekly
- We encourage staff and students to wear a face covering if they wish to do so, as we want everyone to feel comfortable and as safe as possible.
- We will respond with the outbreak management plan if a COVID-19 outbreak is reported by relevant authorities. This will trigger a change in our guidance and safety measures at INA. For example, it could trigger us stipulating face coverings need to be worn in certain areas, amongst other key measures.

I wanted to thank our families for continuing to support in helping keep each other as safe as possible, whilst also maintaining the highest of expectations regarding student attendance.



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Student Attendance

I wrote at the start of the academic year about the importance of attendance, and I believe we have started strongly, especially because COVID-19 is still impacting society, as well as it being a period already where common colds and the flu have been prevalent. For years 7-13 we are second in the Ark Network. **Our attendance at the end of Autumn 1 was 96.2%.** A huge thank you to our families and students for starting positively with attendance. This is the breakdown of the year groups for Autumn 1:

- Y7 is 96.7%
- Y8 is 96.6%
- Y9 is 95.5%
- Y10 is 95.6%
- Y11 is 96.5%
- Y12 is 96.6%
- Y13 is 95.8%.

Please be aware that all students and the academy have an attendance **target of 96%**. If your child is below this level, it is crucial that you support with improving your child's attendance, so that attendance does not become a barrier to attainment.

Academy communication

I wanted to provide an update on some issues regarding communication. Unfortunately, there have been several issues impacting communication and specifically parents/carers being able to contact the academy. We have experienced issues regarding the phone lines at the academy during Autumn 1, some of which were network wide and some specific to us. These issues have compounded ongoing issues with tackling the volume of telephone communication and improving our service in this respect. This is an area of priority for us moving into Autumn 2.

We have taken additional measures to improve communication, to specifically help ensure that parents/carers can contact the relevant people with greater ease. Therefore, we have set up new email addresses that will help ensure pastoral matters are addressed with greater speed and that parents/carers have more direct access to the relevant leaders supporting their child. These inboxes will be monitored by the relevant leaders responsible for each year group.

Please use these email addresses and telephone numbers to contact the relevant academy staff.

- **Y7 - Mr Marecar:** Year7pastoral@isaacnewtonacademy.org and 02081616002
- **Y8 – Mr Wang:** Year8pastoral@isaacnewtonacademy.org and 0121 260 5939
- **Y9 – Mr Atwal:** Year9pastoral@isaacnewtonacademy.org and 02081616033
- **Y10 – Mrs Stylianou:** Year10pastoral@isaacnewtonacademy.org and 02081615985
- **Y11 - Mr Crowther-Green:** Year11pastoral@isaacnewtonacademy.org and 02081615985
- **Y12/13 – Mrs Patel:** Sixthformpastoral@isaacnewtonacademy.org and 02081615908



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For general enquires, continue to use the info@isaacnewtonacademy.org and 020 8911 6666.

Break time changes

We will be moving towards a ***split break time between KS3 & KS4 from Monday 8th November***. This is to improve the student experience and safety during break and lunch times (note: we already have a split KS3/4 lunchtime). Students will receive information in assemblies during the first week back from half term and separate communication will be sent to parents/carers.

New BROMCOM parent/carer platform – My Child At School (MCAS)

We will be going live this half term with our new parent/carer tool <https://www.bromcom.com/Resources/Misc/MyChildAtSchool.pdf>. Download guides have been shared with all parents/carers, and you should have received a personalised invitation link to be able to set this up for your child. We have also communicated parent drop-in session times if you require additional support. If you have not received your invitation email, or require further assistance, please email info@isaacnewtonacademy.org and we will be happy to support.

The aim of MCAS is to improve communication with parents/carers and increase engagement. We will be seeking feedback towards the end of this half term from parents/carers to ensure that the implementation of MCAS delivers our expected outcomes.

Banned items at the Academy

An issue that is increasingly impacting schools is the accessibility of electronic cigarettes or ‘vapes’ by young people under the age of 18. Unfortunately, we have faced several concerns surrounding ‘vaping’ in recent weeks and have been working with our safer schools police officer to address these concerns. Firstly, it is important to note that any student found in possession of these banned items at the academy will be sanctioned as per our behaviour policy and ultimately risk their place at the academy. We are aware that vapes are being illegally sold to underage children using social media platforms, as well as shops. Therefore, we require all parents/carers to be vigilant in relation to this specific issue and contact us if you have any further information or concerns. We will reinforce our expectations with students, work in partnership with our safer schools officer and apply our behaviour and searching policy where required.

Key dates for Autumn 2

- Monday 8th November - ***Year 13 mock examinations start***
- Thursday 11th November (17:30 - 19:30) - ***Sixth Form Open Evening***
- Thursday 11th November - ***Armistice Day*** and will form part of a network wide Ark Moments
- Monday 15th November (spread over three weeks) - ***Year 7-10 & 12 autumn term interim assessments***
- Friday 19th November – ***Inset Day***
- Monday 22nd and Tuesday 23rd November – ***Year 7-13 Flu immunisations***



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- Tuesday 7th December - **Enrichment Day (Autumn term)**
- Thursday 9th December (17:30-19:30) - **Year 11 & 13 Parents/Carers Evening**
- Friday 10th December – **Cultural dress, including Christmas jumper day and Christmas lunch**
- Friday 12th December – **Year 13 UCAS deadline**
- Thursday 16th December (18:00-20:00) – **Winter Concert**
- Thursday 16th December – **Autumn term academic reports emailed to parents/carers**

I also wanted to update our end of summer term dates, which have changed due to the additional day schools have been given due to the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. We have decided to take this day at the end of the summer term. Therefore, our **new end of summer term date is Wednesday 20th July.**

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter.

Yours sincerely,

Morgan Haines
Principal