

03 July 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

Re: First week of reopening BOA to students in Year 10 and Year 12

I hope that this letter finds you and your family members in good health. I am writing – at the end of the first week of reopening – to say *thank you* to students for their excellent conduct, both in lessons and around the academy. It was wonderful to see so many members of the BOA community throughout the week, with 83% of the cohort in Year 10 and 75% on the cohort in Year 12 returning to the academy site. For students who remain at home, I do hope that online learning activities and virtual classroom sessions continue to meet your needs.

I managed to pop into the majority of classrooms over the course of the week but I do need to visit the Year 12 Dance Pathway next Tuesday, as well as saying *hello* to Year 10 students who attend BOA on Wednesdays. I was not able to meet with you this week as I was involved in interviews. I will rectify this next week and I look forward to meeting you all.

I am also writing to inform you that the UK Government has recently released details regarding education from September 2020 onwards and I am currently working my way through the guidance so that I may share these plans with you ahead of the summer break. The Department for Education is keen for all students to return to full-time education in September and has asked schools and academies to deliver a broad and balanced curriculum. I would like to pass on my assurances that the health and safety of students and members of staff will guide the decisions I make, and I look forward to sharing these plans with you in due course. For now, I would like to remind parents of the following return dates for next academic year:

Year 11 – Thursday 10 September at BOA for 8.50am;

Year 13 – Thursday 10 September at the Old Repertory Theatre for 11.05am.

Awarding qualifications in Summer 2021

The Department for Education is entering into a period of open consultation with educational institutions regarding both the content and assessment of all GCSE, BTEC and A' Level qualifications to be awarded in Summer 2021. Whereas I am not able to offer any clarification over the content* that the DfE and Ofqual (The Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation) will expect students to cover for their examinations, it is of great importance that learners do not fall behind with the remote learning BOA has organized over the last term. When students return to BOA in the new academic year, we will assess students' current levels of progress so that we may spot gaps and help accelerate students towards their target grades. It is only fair to advise you that – if grades are calculated in a similar manner to the qualifications being awarded this summer – in-house assessment may play a very important role in the awarding of qualifications being awarded in 2021. For these reasons, we will be making contact with students who appear to have fallen behind to ensure that both an action plan and support are in place.

*It is important to note that recently-published guidance from the DfE informs us that GCSEs in English, Mathematics and Science will be assessed on the full content of each current course.

Year 11 and Year 13 Showcases

We are currently putting together plans for current Year 10 and Year 12, who will have missed out on their exhibitions and showcases due to the Covid-19 lockdown. As we have entered into an agreement with Birmingham Repertory Theatre over use of their commercial spaces next academic year, this should hopefully enable us to provide events that students' families can attend. We will, of course, uphold all rules regarding social distancing and safe working practice. If we are able proceed, I will write to you all with the details.

I will be in touch ahead of the summer break with details of the new academic year at BOA. Until then, I hope you and your family members remain in good health.

Best wishes



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