

25 August 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

Re: Year 10 - Information regarding full opening of Birmingham Ormiston Academy in September 2020

I hope this letter finds you and your family members in good health. We are fast approaching the beginning of a new academic year and I am writing to confirm the arrangements in place to welcome your child to Birmingham Ormiston Academy.

Please note: this letter supersedes any details sent to you in any previous correspondence.

Firstly, please be aware that the Department for Education (DFE) expects all students to return to full-time education from 1st September onwards. This means that the usual rules on school attendance will apply, including:

- parents' and carers' duty to secure that their child attends regularly at the school where the child is a registered pupil at school and they are of compulsory school age;
- schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence.

For students and families who are shielding, the following advice has been published:

- Shielding advice for all adults and children will pause on 1st August, subject to a continued decline in the rates of community transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19). This means that even the small number of pupils who will remain on the shielded patient list can also return to school, as can those who have family members who are shielding.
- Where a pupil is unable to attend school because they are complying with clinical and/or public health advice, we expect schools to be able to immediately offer them access to remote education.

If your child has been advised to remain at home, please contact the Attendance Officer using the following telephone number and email address: tel - 0121 359 9309 / email - attendance@boa-academy.co.uk

Minimising risk:

When we return in September, we will need to uphold our systems of control in order to minimise risk of transmission, especially as we will return to having large groups of students on site. Guidance on effective systems of control from the DFE is as follows:

1. minimise contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does, do not attend the Academy;
2. uphold robust arrangements for personal hygiene - clean hands thoroughly more often than usual;
3. ensure good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach;

4. introduce enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces often, using standard products such as detergents and bleach;
5. minimise contact between individuals and maintain social distancing wherever possible, with clear systems for classrooms arrangements, break times and lunch times;
6. where necessary, the wearing of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).

We have circulated an Information Booklet on COVID-19 to parents, carers and students. We will continue to update the booklet (and the corresponding webpage on the Academy's website) in order to disseminate the latest advice, including the NHS' Test and Trace.

What to do if you are unwell and suspect you have COVID-19 symptoms:

If your child has any of the main symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19), get a test as soon as possible. Your child must stay at home until you receive the test results.

The main symptoms of coronavirus are:

- **a high temperature** – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature);
- **a new, continuous cough** – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual);
- **a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste** – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal.

Most people with coronavirus have at least 1 of the above symptoms.

You can help in the following ways:

- if your child develops symptoms, they must continue to follow the rules to self-isolate with other members of your household and get a test to find out if they have coronavirus;
- if your child tests positive for coronavirus, you must share information promptly about recent contacts through the NHS Test and Trace service to help the NHS alert other people who may need to self-isolate;
- if your child has had close recent contact with someone who has coronavirus, they must self-isolate if the NHS Test and Trace service advises them to do so.

If your child tests positive for coronavirus, please inform the Attendance Officer: tel - 0121 359 9309 / email - attendance@boa-academy.co.uk

The Academy week for new Year 10 students:

Guidance from the DFE states that maintaining distinct groups or bubbles that do not mix makes it quicker and easier in the event of a positive case to identify those who may need to self-isolate. Despite this, the DFE recognises that in secondary schools – and certainly in the older age groups at Key Stage 4 and Post 16 – groups are likely to be the size of a year group to enable the school to deliver the full range of curriculum subjects and for students to receive specialist teaching. As a result, schools and academies should attempt to reduce 'mixing', where possible, in order to reduce the risk of transmission.

We have altered the structure of our timetable for next academic year and we will monitor our ability to deliver the following phases:

- Phase 1:** September 2020 onwards – each year group arriving and leaving the building at different times (where possible), with students organised into ‘bubbles’ in order to minimise ‘mixing’. We will arrange the timetable so that ‘bubbles’ remain static, where possible. Break times and lunch times will be staggered for each year group.
- Phase 2:** October 2020 or January 2021 onwards – we will look to phase out different start times and finish times, as long as the prevalence of COVID-19 continues to decrease. We may continue to stagger break times and lunch times as part of our systems of control.
- Phase 3:** February half-term or April 2021 onwards – we will look to return to our ‘usual’ timetable arrangement, as long as the prevalence of COVID-19 continues to decrease.

NB: It is important to note that there will be timetable changes at certain points during next academic year but – to avoid disruption – we aim to keep these to a minimum.

Below are the timings of the Academy day for **Year 10** on the **Phase 1** timetable (September 2020 onwards):

	Start	Finish
Monday	9.30am	4.15pm
Tuesday	9.30am	4.15pm
Wednesday	9.00am	4.15pm
Thursday	9.30am	4.15pm
Friday	9.30am	2.15pm

Week beginning 7th September 2020:

A reminder that the first official day for new Year 10 students is Monday 7th September 2020. We expect students to arrive at 9.15am for a 9.30am start. As outlined in my last letter, new Year 10 students will be working with our industry practitioners for what is shaping up to be an exciting first week. There are no changes to the timings of the days for this week (please see outline above).

We expect all students to wear the Academy uniform. Guidance from the DFE advises us to regularly change our clothing and to wear items that can be machine washed. As a result, I would advise all parents and carers to purchase a good supply of uniform.

Unfortunately, we are not able to invite parents and carers into the Year 10 showcase originally been planned for Friday 11th September 2020. Instead, we will film the content and make this available once the editing process has been completed.

Behaviour expectations:

We expect members of BOA’s community to act with the utmost respect at all times, not only towards each other but to members of the wider community, especially when students travel to and from the academy site. We have updated our Behaviour Handbook to reflect guidance from the DFE on the consequences for poor behaviour, particularly the deliberate breaking of rules regarding movement around the academy site and new hygiene rules. That said, we have also considered how to build new expectations into the reward system at BOA.

Public transport:

The majority of our students travel into the city centre on public transport and this will inevitably bring them into contact with the wider public. As students travel from all over the West Midlands, we can

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only advise students to minimise their use of public transport, if at all possible. As a result, parents and carers should check the levels of service available to ensure their children are able to reach the Academy safely and in good time. Students must also be mindful of the requirement to wear face coverings on all forms of public transport and I would also advise students to carry hand sanitiser with them, for use after boarding and alighting their bus or train or coach. Please also be aware that the roads surrounding the Academy are a lot busier than usual due to the roadworks taking place on Park Street, at the bottom of Jennens Road.

And finally...

As I bring this letter to a close, I do hope you have all had an enjoyable summer break and I look forward to welcoming your child to BOA at the start of the new academic year.

In the meantime, please do not hesitate in contacting me if you have any questions.

Best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alistair Chattaway', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Alistair Chattaway
Principal