

14.07.2020

Re: Year 8, Class of 2026, information about 2020-2021

Dear Family

I am very excited about welcoming all of our scholars back in the new academic year. We have missed our scholars and of course our families too. I have outlined below important information about the new school year: key dates, and necessary amendments to procedures to ensure that we focus on the safety of our scholars and staff. This means, like all schools, we are having to amend how we operate.

Thursday 3rd September Year 8 fulltime return: important information

Times of the day, uniform and equipment

- Each day, arrive between **07.50 – 08.00am** up the ramp through to the doors leading into G.01 (left of the main reception). Scholars will not be able to come on site before this time and all Year 8 scholars will be expected to be on site by 08.00am
- Year 8 will depart through the G.01 Humanities corridor exit (which is the same as their entry point) at the following times: **15.50 Monday – Wednesday; 15.10 Thursday** and **14.50 Friday**; scholars will not be able to stay on site after this time; the ibase will not be open before or after school; therefore, scholars will need to make their way home immediately
- A clear daily plan should be in place for how your child is getting home; the scholar support desk will not be open and therefore scholars should know how they are getting home before they set off for the day
- Scholars should bring with them permitted items only; it is important that scholars bring the correct equipment into the academy so that they are not sharing equipment. Please see this link to the family handbook: <https://www.dixonsma.com/admissions/family-handbook>
- Scholars should wear their full academy uniform, including their academy jacket, as they will be spending more time outside; again, please see the family handbook for details about uniform
- Scholars should bring with them their PE kit during their first week; however, after their induction period, scholars will need to arrive at the academy in their PE kit on the days they have PE
- Scholars should bring their lanyard and locker key with them
- Going forward scholars will not use a locker; this means, as usual, mobile phones should not be visible at the entrance and exit point and should be switched off in scholar bags as they enter the academy.

Classrooms and curriculum

We have zoned the academy so that each year group has their own designated area of the school. This means that scholars will have dedicated rooms in their Y8 area. Scholars will largely be taught in mixed ability sets to restrict movement around the academy. Therefore, scholars will be taught in their Advisories in their new Advisory room for the majority of their lessons. However, intervention lessons for English and maths will still operate as well as sessions where children have a key worker from Mountain Support. Scholars will still be taught by subject specialists and they will still have access to the full curriculum and be able to go to the majority of specialist areas such as the theatre, DT, computer rooms and PE areas. Some amendments to collective times like collective learning and electives will be amended to follow government guidance. No before or after school clubs will be operating at this time.



Homework

Scholars will be set homework; however, instead of posting homework in communal trays, scholars will hand work directly into their class teacher and some homework will continue to be on-line. A reminder to scholars to complete their summer homework set by their class teachers.

Family dining and break times

We are amending our practices to ensure the safety of staff and scholars. This includes staggered break and lunch times and utilising more of our larger spaces at lunch time to accommodate less children eating together and new seating arrangements. Water and free toast will now be served at break time; no other items will be able to be purchased. We will also be amending how we operate family dining as well as operating an amended menu. Scholars will be allowed to change their DEAR books on their allocated day in a scheduled DEAR session.

Behaviour

It is very important that scholars follow staff instructions first time every time to ensure we keep our whole community safe. Please speak to your child about the importance of their behaviour before they join us for the new academic year. We will support your child with their behaviour through our full induction and making expectations clear; however, the academy will take very seriously any refusal to follow instructions, particularly where scholar and staff safety is jeopardised. Our usual behaviour systems of appreciations, corrections and red lines will continue to operate as usual. **Corrections will start at 16.00 Monday – Wednesday and 15.20 Thursday and 15.00 Friday.**

Communication with the academy

It will not be possible for families to come into the academy without an agreed appointment day and time. Appointments should be made by calling the academy reception or by emailing the relevant member of staff to arrange a meeting. The expected communication will be by phone and email, as we will not be able to accommodate a great number of face-to-face meetings, particularly where rooms will have to be cleaned after each meeting. It is very important that we have up-to-date contact details – if you need to update your details, please email info@dixonsma.com

Over the summer, to help your child get ready for their fulltime return, please encourage them to:

- Read as much as possible
- Complete their summer homework set
- Revise their notes
- Establish a routine of getting up in the mornings, particularly towards the end of the summer
- Read through the family handbook to remind themselves about academy expectations

If you have any questions, please email Mr Evans nevans@dixonsma.com.

Finally, I want to thank families for all of your support. Together, we can ensure that your child continues to receive an outstanding education whilst we focus on their safety also.

Yours sincerely,



Laura Senior
Principal

