

Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2020

Dear Parents/ Carers,

With recent announcements concerning Covid 19 and the coronavirus pandemic I want to update you on changes we have made to our risk assessment. All changes made reflect the latest guidance issued to schools by the DfE. A full copy of our risk assessment can be found on the Academy website.

## Face Masks

Guidance from the DfE states:

*'When an area moves to the local COVID alert level 'high' or 'very high', in education settings where year 7 and above are educated, face coverings should be worn by adults (staff and visitors) and pupils when moving around indoors, such as in corridors and communal areas where social distancing is difficult to maintain. As in the general approach, it will not usually be necessary to wear face coverings in the classroom, where protective measures already mean the risks are lower, and they may inhibit teaching and learning.'*

*'Safe wearing of face coverings requires cleaning of hands before and after touching – including to remove or put them on – and the safe storage of them in individual, sealable plastic bags between use. Where a face covering becomes damp, it should not be worn and the face covering should be replaced carefully.'*

*'On the basis of current evidence, in light of the mitigating measures education settings are taking, and the negative impact on communication, face coverings will not generally be necessary in the classroom even where social distancing is not possible. There is greater use of the system of controls for minimising risk, including through keeping in small and consistent groups or bubbles, and greater scope for physical distancing by staff within classrooms. Face coverings can have a negative impact on learning and teaching and so their use in the classroom should be avoided.'*

*'Some individuals are exempt from wearing face coverings. For example people who cannot put on, wear or remove a face covering because of a physical or mental illness or impairment, or disability, or if you are speaking to or providing assistance to someone who relies on lip reading, clear sound or facial expression to communicate. The same exemptions will apply in education settings.'*

In line with this guidance can you please ensure that your son/ daughter has a face mask (visors alone are no longer acceptable) and also has a plastic bag to store their mask in when they are not wearing it. To support students with this we will be selling reusable masks in school and providing disposable face masks as necessary. We will encourage students to sanitise their hands both before and after wearing their mask.

## Increased Ventilation

The DfE has requested schools to increase ventilation as good ventilation can help reduce the risk of spreading coronavirus. We will achieve this through a variety of measures including:

- Mechanical ventilation systems – set to increase the ventilation rate wherever possible, and adjusted to full fresh air.
- Natural ventilation – opening windows (in cooler weather windows will be opened just enough to provide constant background ventilation, and opened more fully during breaks to purge the air in the space).
- Opening internal doors to create a throughput of air

The academy building has a very good heating system and often rooms can be very warm, we will turn this up to try to keep the temperature high within classrooms. Additionally we will open high level windows in preference to low level to reduce draughts where possible.

We would also be happy for students to wear additional layers of clothing if they feel cold.

This could include wearing a t-shirt under their shirt, a plain, dark coloured jumper/ uniform PE jumper under their blazer or an outdoor coat if absolutely necessary, although we will do everything possible to try to avoid the need for this. 'Hoodies' should not be worn please.

## Changes to Our Timetable

From Monday 9<sup>th</sup> November there will be changes to the academy timetable to create double lessons. This will decrease movement of students within the building. At the same time we will be decreasing the amount of teacher movement around the academy. The additional teaching time this timetable creates will help us to catch students up more quickly on lost learning during lock down.

We will also be creating a second dining hall in the gym to allow all year groups to have break and lunch separately but at more appropriate times to eat. Currently two year groups have lunch at 11.00am and 11.30am.

## Physical Education Lessons

**All** activities / sports that we offer during Physical Education lessons, will now take place outside on the field area and the tennis courts. As we enter the winter months, we want to ensure that all pupils are suitably clothed for PE to avoid any barriers to participation due to the weather conditions. We strongly recommend that students do not take part in PE in just shorts and T-Shirt from now until spring 2021.

I therefore wanted to take this opportunity to clarify what can be worn for Physical Education lessons:

- Outwood Academy Danum Polo T-Shirt
- Outwood Academy Danum Rugby Style jumper (a new version is available to buy which is fleece lined) or a plain, dark colour sweatshirt
- Plain black Shorts, plain black jogging bottoms or plain black tracksuit bottoms, these do not have to have the Outwood logo
- Black long sleeved base layer which can be worn under polo T-shirts

- Black football socks
- Trainers / Football boots depending on the activity

We have made the following adjustments to ensure maximum participation in lessons:

- Plain black leggings
- Plain black jumper which can be worn under the Polo T-Shirt (no hoodies allowed)
- A plain woollen hat

We want to reassure you that if the weather was deemed to be unsafe to partake in physical activities, then students will continue their learning in a classroom environment with regards to the theory aspects of Physical Education.

### **Thank you**

There have been a great many changes needed to the running of our academy to make it as safe as possible. This has not always been easy to implement and there have been many challenges. Our commitment is to ensure the safety of all students and staff whilst continuing to offer the highest quality education to all of our students. We could not do this without your continued support- thank you.

Yours faithfully,



Mrs J Gaunt  
Principal