

August 2020

Dear Parents and Carers of Year 8 students

As the new academic year approaches we hope that you are looking forward to the return to some normality and routine but we also fully understand that you may have some anxieties regarding your child returning to school. The health and safety of all students and staff is paramount to us and we have a full and rigorous risk assessment in place which has been approved by the Laurus Trust Governors and Trustees and adheres fully to the current government guidance. Obviously, this will be revisited regularly and will be refined and adapted along with any new advice we receive.

At LCH we are lucky to have only three year groups to accommodate. Fortunately, we also have three entrances, three staircases and three outside spaces for break and lunch times which allows us to maintain three separate year group bubbles in school whilst retaining a broad and balanced curriculum. A one way system on each floor will be introduced to enable the smooth flow of students around the school during lesson changeovers.

You will appreciate however that school has also had to make some more challenging changes to adhere to the guidance provided by the government.

Dining

Firstly, we will not be able to accommodate all students in the dining hall. Our dining hall will be open and Aspens, our caterers, will be offering hot food on a daily basis.

Year 8 however will not have access to any hot food until Monday the 7th September so please send your child to school with a packed lunch. Students eligible for free school meals will be catered for.

Year 8 will be able to access the dining hall as follows:

| Week Beginning | Year 8 |
|----------------------------|-------------------|
| 7 th September | Lunch |
| 14 th September | Mid-morning Break |
| 21 st September | Lunch |
| 28 th September | Mid-morning break |
| 5 th October | Lunch |
| 12 th October | Mid-morning break |

When Year 8 are unable to access the dining hall at lunch time they will be required to purchase their morning snack and collect a grab bag containing a sandwich, home bake or fruit and a drink to have for their lunch. The cost of the grab bag is £2.20.

The ability to purchase a mid-morning snack on the weeks Year 8 are accessing the dining room at lunch time will not be possible.

A designated place in school has been created for the consumption of food away from the dining room. Could parents and carers please transfer money onto their ParentPay accounts in advance of September 7th? We will be issuing all students with an individual contactless card to be used in the dining hall to replace the fingerprint biometric operation. We are now able to have the water dispensers operational which is a change since the summer term.

Unfortunately, we are not able to provide Breakfast Club and therefore request that students do not arrive at school until 8am when there will then be staff on duty to ensure the Year group bubbles are maintained.

Electives

All electives will be suspended for the first half term at least which will mean that students will be leaving school at 15.05 Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday and 13.15 each Wednesday. Please note that due to this there will no school bus services available on Wednesday afternoons.

Travel

The new bus times are attached. If your child is to use public transport or the school buses they must wear a facial mask. Please encourage your child to walk or cycle to school wherever possible.

Uniform

The full school uniform is expected to be worn with the addition of a close fitting, plain coloured facial mask. Students are expected to wear face coverings on corridors and in communal areas. Students should bring their own face covering to school for this purpose.

As we are sure you are aware, the government is now advising that in areas of national government intervention, including Stockport, face coverings should be worn and we provide a link for your reference below.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-in-education/face-coverings-in-education>

“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.”

Some students may be exempt from wearing a face covering; please email your Head of Year if you feel your child is not able to wear a face covering due to medical or special educational needs.

Behaviour

The normal behaviour policy will obviously still apply, as will additional rules regarding safety and social distancing.

Equipment

Students to bring all own equipment (as usual). Students to bring their own pencil cases containing basic equipment that should not be shared. We will be unable to routinely lend out any basic equipment, so it is more important than ever for students to bring with them all of the equipment that they will require for the school day.

Hand washing / Cleaning

As the students enter each class they must use the anti-bacterial gel provided. There are additional dispensers of anti-bacterial gel situated around the school building.

At the end of each lesson all tables will be wiped down with anti-bacterial wipes before the next class enter.

Additional lidded bins have been provided in school for use by all to ensure we 'Catch it, Bin it, Kill it'.

Increased frequency of cleaning of communal areas / high contact points is occurring – toilets, door handles, printers, white boards.

We are very much looking forward to greeting all our students on Wednesday 2nd September. Please be reminded that this is for a shorter period of time than normal so that we can induct our students in to the new systems and to inform them of our expectations.

Year 8 – 10.45-12.45

We recognise that COVID 19 has affected families in different ways. If you have any specific concerns and you would like us to know so we can support your child, please get in touch. This can be via a phone call in September or an email when convenient. Thank you to those parents who have already done so. We will not discuss this with your child unless this is your/their wish and we will not share any information beyond the people you specify (generally Form Tutors and Head of Year).

Support can be put in place when needed, both from key staff including our Pastoral Leads/School Counsellor in school or people outside of school that we can refer to. Some tutor time activities and PSHE lessons will address aspects of COVID-19 when we look at Resilience and Mental Wellbeing when back in school.

I am sure you will understand that we will be limiting visitors to the school site, Parents/Carers can still drop off in the usual way but we ask that you remain in your vehicles. Site will be extremely busy so we do ask that if at all possible your child should walk or cycle to school if they are not using the school bus service. Please do not drop off or arrange to pick up your child on nearby roads. We all need to respect the wishes of our local residents. Parents/Carers will only be allowed on the school site by appointment and will be expected to wear a mask.

You will most likely be aware of the disproportionate effect of COVID-19 on individuals of a BAME background - Evidence from the Office for National Statistics shows a greater impact

of COVID-19 on Black communities, if you have any specific concerns please contact us to discuss in September.

Current guidance states that students who have been identified as extremely clinically vulnerable can attend school from September.

In order to keep our school community safe, we ask that if someone in your household shows symptoms of COVID-19 then please inform us at the earliest opportunity via enquiries@laurusheadleholme.org.uk.

Please do not send your child into school if anyone in your household is showing signs of COVID-19.

We have attached a Coronavirus-related Absence Guide to assist you over the coming weeks should your child or a member of your household start to show symptoms of coronavirus.

Finally, I would like to take the opportunity to thank you again for all your support throughout this unprecedented time.

Take care and we look forward to welcoming all of our students in September.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'G. Theobald', followed by a small horizontal line.

Gill Theobald

Head of School