



Horizons Specialist Academy Trust
Providing infinite opportunities

Chief Executive

Elizabeth Horne CBE

Abbey Hill Academy

Ketton Road
Stockton-On-Tees
TS19 8BU



Tel: 01642 677113

Fax: 01642 679198

Email: abbeyhill@horizonstrust.org.uk

Web: abbeyhill.horizonstrust.org.uk

Rebecca Whelan

Principal

Thursday 20th August 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope that you and your family remain well and you have managed to enjoy the summer holiday period, despite the weather and the on-going restrictions in place.

We are all very much looking forward to seeing students back at Abbey Hill. I don't think we have ever looked forward to September so much before.

Detailed below are a few reminders about **our plans** to make sure everyone keeps safe in school, as well as being able to learn and enjoy positive experiences:

- Students will return to school on **Wednesday 2nd September 2020**
- The School day will run approximately **9am-2pm** with some flexibility for slightly earlier start and finish times to accommodate transport
- Students will remain in their tutor groups for the school day
- Students will be supported by the same staff throughout the day
- Students will be based in their tutor rooms
- Students will access break times in outside zones around the school site
- Additional cleaning will take place throughout the school day, with classrooms being cleaned when students are accessing outdoor areas
- Students will have a shorter lunchbreak, and have their lunch brought to them
- Students will exit transport one vehicle at a time and be supported by staff
- Students are to wear their uniforms
- Hand sanitisers are available across the site. Individual packs of hand wipes will be provided and used for students who need support with cleaning their hands.

When students return to school they will see some minor changes across the school site. There is a one way system around the main building and extra signage to support hygiene and social distancing. It is important to stress that Abbey Hill remains the welcoming and amazing place that it has always been. On arrival, students will be greeted by staff and supported to their classrooms. We will work through the new term together.



Horizons Specialist Academy Trust is a company limited by Guarantee and exempt charity.
Registered in England and Wales at Abbey Hill Academy, Ketton Road, Stockton-On-Tees. TS19 8BU.
Company number 08608287

Term Dates

Autumn Term 1: Wednesday 2nd September- Friday 23rd October

Autumn Term 2: Tuesday 3rd November- Friday 18th December

Transport

I know some of you will have concerns regarding transport arrangements, and we as a school are still awaiting confirmation of what this will look like. Transport tend to communicate directly with parents and carers and we receive the lists once we are back at school. The Government did release some additional guidance for transport services on Tuesday 18th August and the document details a series of preventative measures transport organisations are to take to minimise risk. The Government has also provided additional funding for Local Authorities to invest in a greater number of vehicles to minimise the number of young people having to travel together. It is not clear if this relates to public transport or will be and can be used for home to school transport. The guidance certainly offers a level of reassurance and we as a school have confidence in the local authorities transport service. If you wish to read the guidance please see the following link

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/transport-to-school-and-other-places-of-education-autumn-term-2020/transport-to-school-and-other-places-of-education-autumn-term-2020>

If you have any specific queries in relation to transport, I advise that you contact the transport team directly.

You might be wondering about **face coverings** and whether your child will be required to wear one on the home to school transport.

Local authorities are to advise that children and young people aged 11 or over to wear a face covering when travelling on dedicated transport. This does not apply to people who are exempt from wearing a face covering on public transport.

Until the start of the autumn term, children and young people have not been expected to wear face coverings on dedicated transport, although they have been able to if they wish. They are adopting this new position in light of all children returning to education full-time and the fact that '1 metre plus' social distancing measures will not uniformly apply on dedicated school or college transport.

A face covering is a covering of any type which covers your nose and mouth. Reusable or single-use face coverings are available for parents and carers to buy. A scarf, bandana, religious garment or hand-made cloth covering may also be used but these must securely fit round the side of the face.

Face coverings:

- may be particularly useful where measures such as distancing and sitting in bubbles or year groups are not possible
- may help children to feel more confident about using home to school transport, and parents to feel more confident about their child using home to school transport
- **should not be worn by those who may not be able to handle them as directed (for example, those with specific SEND) as it may inadvertently increase the risk of transmission**
- are not a substitute for other protective measures such as good hand hygiene

Therefore, it is our understanding that if your child is able to wear a face covering and you would like them to then this is advisable however, not compulsory for our students who all have special educational needs.

Results Day

You will have seen a lot on the television in recent weeks about the GCSE and Vocational results. Staff at Abbey Hill worked extremely hard during the summer term to ensure that student work and teacher assessments were submitted to the exam boards in plenty of time and demonstrated the achievement of our students. Therefore, we were poised to receive some positive outcomes despite the negative press and concerns raised when A-Level results were shared. In the last week the Government has made a U-Turn and said that student results will now be based on the teacher assessment or Ofqual's algorithm, meaning whichever result is the highest the young person will be awarded this. At the time of writing this letter, we had seen our student results and had made arrangements for these to be shared in the post. We are pleased to report that the extensive evidence we submitted to the examination awarding bodies to support grading decisions was successful and this is reflected in student results. Our students worked incredibly hard throughout Key Stage 4 and 5 to produce excellent work that proves without any shadow of doubt, the grades they receive this week in 2020 reflect their personal achievement and success. I would just like to say a huge well done to all our students who worked so hard during their time in school and college and deserve these positive outcomes.

After-School Clubs

We are keen to re-establish our enrichment offer, but we will only be able to do so once we have reviewed the first few weeks of the new school life. Therefore, no after-school clubs will be taking place certainly for the first few weeks of term. We will aim to provide updates in relation to this once we know more.

Back to School Campaign

On Monday 17th August, the Government launched its **#backtoschoolsafely** campaign to reassure parents and students that schools and colleges are ready for their return in September. We continue to follow the Government's guidance. See the link below for more information:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-campaign-launches-to-get-children-back-to-school-safely>

To keep up-to-date with what's happening at Abbey Hill please visit our website regularly and look at our Twitter page [@HorizonsTrust](#)

In the meantime, I wish you all well, and hope you get to enjoy the remainder of the holidays.

We can't wait for the school term to begin!

Kind regards,



Rebecca Whelan
Principal