

18 March 2022

Dear Parents and Carers

First and foremost, I hope that this letter finds you and your loved ones safe and well.

After enjoying a period of time in the academy that felt like the new normal, (returning to everything we want school life to be), last week we found ourselves in the most challenging period of the pandemic yet. But as we have before, we adapted and then we moved on again, building back better than ever.

Thus, I would like to thank you and the whole community for your support this term so far. It has been humbling to see families in the academy for events such as parents evenings, and Adwick's Got Talent.

Students have resumed the wider experiences of academy life with a live performance from the National Theatre of Jekyll and Hyde, and we have seen some great results from sporting fixtures across the county. Classrooms have again been focussed with active, engaging and collaborative learning, with an emphasis on praising students' efforts. The culmination of this hard work from both teachers and students has been reflected in the Year 11 and 13 mock exams. Students' attitudes and preparation towards this national series of mock exams has been superb and I'm sure this will be reflected in their outcomes.

However, last week brought us a stark reminder of the challenges we still face. At the beginning of last week we saw a spike in student and staff Covid-19 cases, with upwards of 30 staff absences per day and proportional student cases.

Whilst the national restrictions have been modified, as an education setting we follow the Department for Education guidance for managing Covid-19, which requires people to isolate following a positive test and not to return to the educational setting until receiving two negative results, 24 hours apart, from day 5 and 6.

The health and safety of the community is paramount, very closely followed by high quality teaching and learning. With the above in mind we had to take decisive action to ensure a safe learning environment. Partially closing the academy is a very last resort and a decision that we do not take lightly, but we had to make the decision to close to Years 7 and 9 from Tuesday to Friday and then also Year 8 later in week to enable us to safely deliver integral aspects such as the Year 11 and 6th form examinations and provide care and support for our more vulnerable cohorts. With this, I fully understand and appreciate the frustrations of students and families who might have been adversely affected.

I share my sincere gratitude to families who supported us during this difficult time, colleagues who adapted the curriculum timetable daily and covered a multitude of duties to keep the academy operational and to those who delivered a remote curriculum through Google classroom. I sincerely hope that we do not have to take action such as this in future and that we have just passed through our peak of the past two years.

Sunday 20th March 2022 marks the first day of Spring. Surely no better time to build back from the root, strong and revitalised. I'm under no illusion that we will still be impacted to a degree from last week's spike, but we will be in a position to build back better with all students in the academy and staff returning.

We're building though from strong foundations, the mock exams, Praising Stars, attitude to learning, progress, behaviour and attendance data and statistics are all pointing in the right direction. But most importantly the culture of praise and belief within students and staff can be felt across the academy.

With this it is the right time to review our high standards and expectations to ensure every student in the academy is prepared for learning and modelling the attributes that will make them successful now and in their future careers. We appreciate your support in ensuring your child can adhere to the following expectations.

Uniform

We really value our high expectations around uniform as students take pride in their appearance preparing them for a professional working environment. **From Monday 21st March we will revert to our standard uniform expectations as detailed in our Uniform Policy.** Students will no longer wear additional jumpers under blazers. With a rise in temperatures in comparison to the winter months our school heating system can compensate for the additional ventilation we have in place. We monitor classroom temperature with the DfE issued Co2 monitors to ensure a comfortable and safe learning environment.

Students must wear the academy blazer, tie and school trousers or skirt. This must be accompanied by a white shirt and plain black shoes, no trainers, boots, pumps or canvas shoes.

We carry a small amount of uniform in school. If a student has a uniform concern they can speak to their learning manager or our Student Information Desk receptionist at the beginning of the day so that we can support them.

Blazers must be worn with the sleeves rolled down, shirts tucked in and only badges agreed by the academy may be worn on blazers. Other badges e.g. charity badges, must only be on outdoor coats or bags.

Items of uniform with the Outwood logo can be purchased via Trutex <https://www.trutex.com/>. You can also access Trutex Preloved uniform via the website using the code LEA00980SC.

Make-up, jewellery, nails and hair

Noticeable make-up is not allowed, any make-up must be discreet. False eyelashes are not to be worn, this includes semi and permanent lashes. Nail polish and any type of false nails are not allowed. No jewellery is allowed, except for a wrist watch and/or a Medic Alert necklace or bracelet. Smart watches are not allowed in school. If a student is thinking about having their ears pierced, or any other piercing, this should be done at the start of the summer holidays as students will not be allowed to wear earrings or any other jewellery including clear inserts.

Hairstyles and colour should be sensible, natural and not cause distraction. Hair accessories can only be worn in the hair and must be black or school purple.

Jewellery will be confiscated and stored in the school safe to be collected by an appropriate adult.

Equipment for Learning: School bag and Planner

All students must have a school bag, large enough to fit their school planner, A4 workbooks and their PE Uniform.

All students must have a planner. This is a key resource for every lesson and is distributed to students at the beginning of each academic year. If a student loses or defaces their planner it is their responsibility to replace the planner by purchasing a new one via the Student Information Desk at a cost of £4. All students will also need a pen, pencil, ruler and rubber.

We pride ourselves on our high standards which prepare our students for excellent outcomes and great life chances. A smart uniform and being prepared for lessons improves discipline, self-esteem and self-respect. Uniform focuses attention upon learning and away from distractions.

In regards to health and wellbeing we will be continuing our Covid safe strategies such as sanitising hands on entry to all lessons, ventilating indoor spaces and adhering to a one-way-system at peak circulation times. Whilst these measures support in reducing covid transmission they will also minimise other transmissible viruses.

Healthy eating

Our school restaurant provides a varied and extensive menu which caters for students' individual needs and parents can also provide a packed lunch from home if they choose. We request that students do not bring nuts into the academy due to allergies. We also request that students not bring energy drinks, fizzy drinks, sweets or large bags of crisps into the academy. Chewing gum is strictly prohibited.

Punctuality

We expect students to be on site by 8:15. In preparation to move to lessons at 8:20 and lessons commence by 8:25. Arguably the start of the lesson is the most important, as it sets the foundation for learning. Arriving late not only limits the learning for the latecomer, but it disrupts and limits the learning for every student in the class as the teacher has to recap and adjust for the group. A sanction is issued for all students who arrive late, as a preventative measure but also an opportunity to catch-up on missed learning.

On occasions we understand that some students may not meet these high standards and expectations and it is our duty with your support to educate them on how and why these standards are important in representing our community, supporting their future life chances and ensuring our focus can be on high quality learning experiences to achieve great outcomes. Consequences can/will be applied for misdemeanours in meeting standards and expectations.

I am sure that you will be able to support us in reinforcing these standards with your children so that we can support them in achieving excellent outcomes and having great experiences at Outwood Academy Adwick.

Recent events have brought us all a significant degree of disruption and hope that this Spring offers the opportunity to continue rebuilding our children's futures and opportunities. We

will always have high expectations and high aspirations for our students and look forward to the bright future ahead of them.

If you have any questions or require additional support at any time please do not hesitate in contacting the academy. We have a vast array of experts in classroom teachers, year group learning managers, attendance leaders, Inclusion and SEND specialists and many other areas of expertise; all with the vision of putting your child at the centre and meeting their individual needs and potential.

I look forward to welcoming you into the academy very soon to celebrate the achievements of our students.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A Scruby', with a large, sweeping flourish that loops back under the name.

Andy Scruby
Principal