

Ref:ARY/DER/WB

3 September 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

Welcome back to school

Since children have been away from school, our staff have been working hard to support those in school, those learning at home and to prepare our school for your child's return. A huge amount of work has taken place and our academy is now ready for the new academic year, with arrangements in place that reflect the current Department for Education guidance. What exactly does that mean? Well lots of things really, staggered starts, different entrances, year group bubbles, one-way systems, extra cleaning, hand sanitising...etc. The list is endless.

One additional thing that we've done is to ask all students and our staff to wear face coverings whilst moving around in corridors and communal areas. I thought it might be useful to explain why we've taken this step. The current advice from the government and the World Health Organisation is that face coverings are an effective way of reducing the transmission of the virus. So, shops, cafes, public transport and gyms all require us all to wear a face covering. In essence, it's about protecting, supporting and caring for each other.

We've decided to extend to our staff and students the same care and courtesy we extend to shop workers and others in our society by asking students and staff to wear a face covering when moving around in social areas. In classrooms, we understand that teaching and learning would be more difficult and less effective wearing face coverings, so we've arranged our classrooms to maximise social distancing and implemented regular cleaning and sanitising programmes. In a small number of cases, where a pre-existing medical condition makes wearing a mask difficult, we will make alternative arrangements.

Most other non-Delta academies have requested students provide a mask for public transport or in social areas. However, we have decided to issue masks to all students and staff, ones that can be washed and re-used; we don't want to add to the mountain of waste being generated. Each student will receive three masks over the next week. This will allow students to wear one on Monday, one Tuesday and one on Wednesday; Monday's and Tuesday's can be washed Wednesday ready for Thursday and Friday. In this way students start each day with a fresh clean mask. Please remind your child to keep one in their pocket in the sealed bag we gave them as some have already forgotten theirs today.

There are over 12,300 students in our Delta secondary academies and we would like to thank the overwhelming majority of parents for their support of our request to respect each other in social areas by wearing a face covering. Your well wishes for the new school year have really boosted us all here at the academy.

Your child has been out of school for almost six months and we will do everything in our power to support them to catch up and enjoy being back with their friends and staff.

Thank you; it's a great privilege to welcome our students back into school.

Kind regards

Mrs A Rooney
Principal
De Warenne Academy