



27 August 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

### **Welcoming Back Our Students in September**

We would like to thank all parents and carers, students and staff for how our school community has worked together over the past few months. It has probably been the greatest challenge that any of us has ever had to face.

The very good news is that North Oxfordshire Academy will be re-opening in full in September.

Following the publication of the Department for Education's (DFE) guidance for the reopening of schools, we are now finalising our risk assessment so that we can reopen for everyone in line with government and scientific advice.

We know that students thrive best when they have routine, consistency and stability around them. We will therefore be doing everything we can to ensure that, wherever possible, school life is as close to what they are used to as we can. Our expectations about behaviour and uniform will be in place as normal.

Government scientists have set out what will happen if any student or member of staff displays symptoms of COVID-19. Firstly, it is essential that everyone – students, parents and staff – continues to follow the NHS guidance and that they do not come into school if they are experiencing any symptoms. We would ask every parent to keep any child displaying symptoms of COVID-19 at home and immediately inform the school. Likewise, if any member of your household tests positive for COVID-19, please keep your child at home and inform us as soon as possible.

If a student becomes unwell at school with a high fever, new continuous cough or has a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia), they will be sent home. We will arrange for them to be looked after safely, separately from others, until they can be collected. They will be expected to self-isolate for at least 7 days and arrange to have a COVID-19 test.

Should we experience a confirmed case of COVID-19 within our school community, we will work closely with our local health protection team to ensure the situation is managed quickly and effectively. They will advise us on what next steps – if any – we will need to take as a school. We will be putting in place stringent control measures as per the DfE's guidance in order to minimise the need for larger groups of children to self-isolate should there be a positive case within school.

In the event of any large number of students having to self-isolate or in the event of a local lockdown that means we are required to close the school, we will immediately revert to the online learning that has been working well this term. We very much hope that we do not need to return to any form of lockdown but, if we do, we are confident that we will be able to continue with learning from home. Once again, the support of parents in ensuring children access these resources will be vital.



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Finally, we know that some students will feel apprehensive about returning to school after such a long time away. This is completely understandable. We will therefore be taking particular steps to ensure that our pastoral support for each student allows for this and provides time and space for any worries or concerns to be addressed so that each student is able to enjoy being back at school.

Thank you for your patience and understanding over the past few months. Everyone is looking forward to welcoming our students back to school.

Yours sincerely

*Alison Merrills*

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**Principal**

**Principal:** Alison Merrills

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