

12th July 2020

Dear Parent/Carers,

Re: End of Term Letter, July 2020

As we come to the end of the academic year, it is a good time to reflect on what we have achieved, update you on some changes and look forward to September 2020. I think we can all agree that this has been the most unique and unusual school year of our lives. I have been very proud to be a part of our community over this time and have been inspired by the way people have navigated the crisis.

Firstly, can I thank you all for the continued support that you have given me during my first year at Ormiston Rivers. I am so proud of the way our students have continued to shine and respond to the positive changes made in our academy. I know the last term has been very challenging for students; working at home is not easy, but despite this our students have continued to work hard and get involved in a virtual school life plus learn new skills and learn things about themselves during lockdown. A special thanks also to the staff, who continue to go above and beyond and who have also worked extremely hard.

Our new Year 7 and Year 12 cohort have been busy working on the transition work that we have set to support them in the transition in September.

Of course, we await the summer results but I am confident that the hard work from our students and staff will pay off and prepare them for their futures. Despite finishing school life early and having no exams to sit for the majority of students, this year will definitely be a year we will not forget in a hurry. I know there is a lot of speculation around the results but we will continue to support our students and we are very much looking forward to the results day. A separate letter to students in Year 11 and Year 13 will be shared regarding exam results collection. However due to the restrictions on gatherings, we will regrettably not be able to run a face to face results day this summer. However we will still be able to offer Sixth Form enrolment and careers meetings which will be bookable, scheduled meetings and further details of this will be covered in the letter.

As the new academic year approaches, I am excited about the new staff that will be joining us and making Ormiston Rivers Academy the best it can be. Your partnership in this journey is so very important and I look forward to continuing to work with you to help provide your child with an education he/she can be proud of.

From September we have changed the school day format slightly, students will now spend longer with their mentor in the morning; the afternoon slot has been removed and the time has been added to the morning so that we can utilise this time to deliver our PSHE curriculum. <https://www.ormistonriversacademy.co.uk/the-academy-day>

I would like to thank you for your continued support in maintaining the high standards of uniform that our students have displayed this year. Members of the local community and visitors to the Academy often compliment the students on their high standard of uniform and the pride which they take in their own appearance and in their academy. It is always important

that we maintain these high standards and that our young people are “dressed for learning” as we believe it mentally prepares them for school life and beyond. I would ask that all parents/carers continue to support this stance and ensure that students are wearing blazers, the correct skirt/trousers and appropriate shoes when they return after the holidays. Please note that students are not allowed to wear fashion scarves, and hooded tops and leisurewear are not permitted. Please look at our website for the full details. For days when students have PE or attend a sports club afterschool, they can wear the school PE kit as changing rooms will not be available.

<https://www.ormistonriversacademy.co.uk/academy-uniform>

We are all back in September but in very different circumstances. No more rotas or “virtual” learning, but there is explicit guidance as to how we must manage the situation. The Government has said that all students will return as normal, so therefore we will be expecting to see all year groups return in September in full uniform. Obviously if anything changes, I will write to you in the summer holidays with any updates. However the Prime Minister has made it very clear that the expectation is that all students will be back, full time for the new academic year.

I want to share the principles we are working on, based on legal requirements:

- All staff will be back full time and on site
- There will be whole year group “bubbles” that cannot mix once on site
- Teachers will be travelling to students’ classrooms to teach to avoid different year groups mixing
- Students will remain static in one room as much as possible, only moving for practical lessons. However, they will remain in a dedicated block/area so, depending on facilities, practical lessons may be restricted.
- PE, Drama, Music Food, Technology and Art are working out how they will deliver their lessons with 1m distancing, whilst adhering to Health and Safety regulations
- Not every Computer lesson will be on a computer – there may be one theory lesson, and one practical lesson with computers
- We will “zone” break/lunch areas
- Students will have two breaks but one of them will be in their classrooms. Staggering 6 break times would take all day, but at one of their break times, students will be able to purchase food. Food will be available but will be “grab and go” style, so if students prefer to bring in packed lunch this is fine.
- There will not be staggered starts and ends to days for all year groups due to transport. Mrs. Mahoney has been working with the bus companies with regards to this. However, they do not have enough buses to stagger without impacting on learning time. Therefore, students will mix on the bus so we strongly advise all students to wear a face covering. Hand sanitiser will be available on the bus for entry and exit.
- External visits will be limited and no overseas trips will take place next term; we will review this in December.
- Enrichments clubs will run after school, but will be restricted due to year group bubbles, as we have usually run clubs for multiple year groups
- Pre- arranged parents meetings will **only** take place in the large Meeting Room in the main reception area.
- Parents will not be allowed to just come into school (as per our normal procedures) - they will have to make an appointment.
- There will be no assemblies - we will record these and show them in mentor time
- Transport will be the same, i.e. usual pick up times and year groups will mix as a result. However, we would ask parents to ensure that students have hand sanitiser and use it before boarding and on disembarking any transport. Also, please ensure children over 11 years of age wear face coverings while travelling on public or school buses – unless they are exempt.

Equipment - where possible students will be asked to bring in their own equipment as usual, so can you please ensure that they have a pencil case with a pen, pencil, ruler and rubber. If students are studying Art they will need an Art pack which will be available to purchase from our shop. Further information regarding this will be shared soon.

This is our “new normal”. It will change again, I am sure, but I will always share our thinking with you, so that you are as informed as possible, and in order to support our planning. In this respect, please see the attached school plan, which details the areas that each year group will use, as well as entrance and exit points, and toilet.

Things will not return to the “normal” we are used to. So be prepared to change, adapt to our methods and be resilient to that change.

I wanted to leave you with one thought. I will **not** be reducing the curriculum as national leaders are suggesting. This will not happen at Ormiston Rivers Academy. Some schools will just be teaching English, Maths and Science for two terms and no other subjects. We will be delivering our curriculum in all its fantastic glory in its entirety. Our students need to experience all subjects - that is where the love of learning, and the awe and wonder of education comes from. We will supplement gaps in learning with tutors and additional support but I will not remove subjects from our curriculum. I am very passionate about this and, educationally, it is my “non-negotiable”.

Please see below the dates for the calendar for next term, please be aware that we have staggered year groups’ return in the first week as below, so please ensure you are aware of what day your child will attend.

Wednesday 2nd September 2020 - Year 7 and Year 12 return only

Thursday 3rd September 2020 - Year 7, Year 12, Year 11 and Year 10 return only

Friday 4th September 2020 - All year groups return

Thursday 17th September 2020 - Open Evening (Virtual)

Thursday 24th September 2020 - Year 7 “Settling In” Evening - Bookable slots

Thursday 8th October 2020 - Sixth Form Open Evening/Year 11 Information Evening (Virtual)

Friday 23rd October 2020 - Last day of the half-term

Monday 26th - Friday 30th October - Half term

Monday 2nd November 2020 - Return to school

Wednesday 16th December 2020 - Last day of the half-term

Please also see the website for further key dates going forwards:

<https://www.ormistonriversacademy.co.uk/calendar-of-events>

I do hope that each and every one of you are able to switch off for the summer. If you have any concerns that you feel may be playing on your mind over the summer break please do contact us beforehand so that we can help to address them. Google classroom will still be available for students to access work. However this will not be monitored as it is during term-time. Work packs are also available from the main reception so please request and collect these prior to the 15th July. Please also remember that we will close on Wednesday 15th July at 1.30pm for all students, including key worker students.

Now it is time for a well-earned break for everyone when we get to Wednesday 15th July. I would like to take this opportunity to extend my personal good wishes to you all, on behalf of everyone at the Academy, and to wish you a happy and safe summer holiday.



Emma Baker
Principal