

15 July 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

As we head towards what is the end of a very unusual academic year, we hope you and your families are well and that the last few weeks in Year 6 have been successful, with your child managing to enjoy some of the end of year activities that would have usually taken place.

We are very much looking forward to welcoming your child to their new school in September, and would like to take this opportunity to share some really important information with you, before we all break up.

Firstly, we want to thank you for your support so far, helping your child to access the transition information on the website and all the information we have sent to you through the post. If you have not managed to access the activities on our website just yet, the site remains live and can be accessed via the following link.

<https://www.riverside.outwood.com/year-6-transition>

We also hope that you have felt supported by the short video messages that have taken place over the half term, giving your son/daughter the confidence to start secondary school in September, and the opportunity to ask questions. Thank you to those of you who have been in touch through social media and to those who have contacted use by email. We have spoken with many of you over the phone and your positivity during such unprecedented times have been greatly appreciated.

To help to try and put your mind at rest, in these unprecedented times, we wanted to let you know what else we have been doing to support Year 6 children in their transition to secondary school. As a Trust, leading executives and senior leaders have been meeting weekly to discuss plans for the Year 6 transition, as we know how important it is to ensure a successful integration into our schools. During these meetings all aspects of transition have been discussed, with our most recent objective to look at bespoke planning for the September start.

Following the release of the government guidance for the full reopening of schools in September we are finalising our plans for the first day and first few weeks for Year 7. With this in mind, we are endeavouring to ensure that the necessities of starting secondary school are blended with some of the transition activities missed, whilst also clearly planning for students to gain the skills needed for the next stage in their academic life. In addition, we are considering how best to identify and close any gaps that have appeared in skills and knowledge during the 'lockdown' period.

We have been in contact with our feeder primary schools to gather pastoral and academic data, so we are best placed to plan for all aspects of their schooling, including any additional needs that they may have.

September still brings many challenges for schools, and we wanted to share some of the specific detail regarding the first few weeks with you:

- Year 7 students will start their secondary school on Wednesday 2nd of September, and will be the only year group in school for the year. This enables our students to have a completely unique experience where children will be the only year group and will aid transition from Primary to Secondary greatly.
- Students will be placed into year group 'bubbles', and breaks and lunchtimes will be staggered to maintain these bubbles to ensure we follow the government guidelines and support the country in tackling the spread of the COVID 19 infection.
- Year 7 will be placed into a year group tutor group, and will initially be taught in this group. We will have 5 tutor groups and for the vast majority of the week students will remain in this tutor group.
- Our academy day will start at 8.20am with lesson 1 beginning at 8.25am. Students have 1 hour lessons. Break and tutor time will take place between 10.25am and 11am. Students will spend half of this time with their tutor and half on their break. At breaktimes students will be able to access food and drink in the dining area or spend time, weather permitting, in the yard area. On a Monday there will be 2 lunch sittings – 12pm to 12.30pm and then 1pm – 1.30pm. Lunch on all other days will have 3 sittings with an additional sitting 12.30pm – 1pm. Students will be made aware in their tutor groups on the first day when they will take break and lunch.
- We are very excited about the PE provision we are offering to our students. For the first term initially our students will take a short walk on a Monday to use the facilities at Middlesbrough College. During PE students will be in larger bubbles, to accommodate boys PE groups with Mr Cox and girls PE groups with Miss Connor. Students will have 2 hour PE slots either between 8.25am and 10.25am or 11am and 1pm on a Monday. With this in mind it is vital we have consent forms for visits returned to us for your child to engage with their first PE session on Monday 7th September. Our students will have exclusive use of the sixth form changing facilities at this time. They will also access the Astroturf area and the Sports Hall and take part in a variety of activities during this time.
- We have designed a unique programme of study for the first couple of weeks for our children, and are committed to an enhanced pastoral programme to support students return to full time schooling, and their transition to secondary school. Outwood Academy Riverside will be delivering a Values Programme – Belonging to Riverside - for the initial 2 weeks of the new school year. Within this, students will engage in a variety of lessons, presentations and tasks to help develop a sense of community and belonging within our new school community. Our Values Programme will include tasks and activities to support wellbeing, to gain, and regain necessary study skills, to form a sense of belonging to their new Academy, year group and tutor group, and to identify literacy and numeracy levels to allow for intervention and early support.
- We have created a working partnership with MFC Foundation to deliver an outstanding Health and Wellbeing curriculum. Our students will work with MFC Foundation staff on Thursday each week following the Values Programme. Lessons will focus on a wide variety of health and wellbeing related issues including physical health, mental health, exercise, healthy eating and so on.
- We are also planning a celebration event for Year 7 towards the end of September to share all the positives that will have occurred since starting secondary school.

Much more specific detail will be shared via letter pertaining to the whole Academy plan in response to the government guidance. Please rest assured that your child's safety during these ongoing uncertain times will always be of paramount importance to us.

We will continue to work as a Trust and as an Academy to ensure a positive programme back to normalcy is realised, and look forward to working with parents, students and staff to do this.

In addition to this detail we have some logistics to communicate to you.

Uniform Collection

We hope that you have managed to complete your order with Trutex, but please get in touch via e-mail if not. The collection day is Thursday 16th July for orders that were placed prior to the Trutex deadline, you will have received a call to confirm if your uniform was ordered prior to the deadline and is ready for collection on the 16th July. Our Uniform Collection on this day is from the East Stand Concourse at MFC Riverside Stadium – boys between 11 and 1pm and girls between 1pm and 3pm. Staff will be on hand to support with distribution and social distancing.

We request that just one adult comes to collect the bundle to limit the number of people on site. The bundle can then be taken home and tried on, and if any aspect needs changing then you will be able to bring it back at a designated time the following day Friday 17th July. If your uniform order was not received prior to the deadline but you have placed an order then Trutex will contact you with a date for collection and will specify the location for this. If you have not yet placed an order for uniform then please do this as a matter of urgency. In order to ensure your child has a uniform for the first day back in September an order must be placed by July 27th 2020 using the boys / girls order form and send this back to bundles@trutex.com.

First Day

As mentioned already, the return date for year 7 will be Wednesday 2nd September, and we expect to see students arrive before 8.20, where weather permitting, they will be asked to congregate on the yard area to chat to friends in small groups. If weather does not permit this then students will be given access to the dining area at 2 Queen's Square. Staff will be present at different points around the building and the area outside of the building. Please note that parents / carers will not be given access to the yard area or the inside of the building due to safeguarding. If you need to speak to staff when you drop your child off there will be a variety of staff available.

Students will then be informed of their tutor groups and taken to their tutor base to start the programme for the day.

During the day students will be given their planners and timetables, have a tour of the school, receive a presentation from the Principal and spend time with their tutor, going through lots of the details that they will need to know to successfully get started at Outwood Academy Riverside. The day will finish with an inter form quiz based on the school and the transition information they have received, we hope this will give an informative but fun end to the day.

Lunch

The Academy uses an online payment system 'ipay' for lunches, trips and any additional payments that may be needed whilst your child is at school with us. We are a fully cashless school so students never have to worry about carrying cash.

We will be issuing login details during the Summer for 'ipay' and when you receive these please use these with the associated information leaflet to set your child's account up and place money on it. When this is done then your child will be able to purchase food from the restaurant. We have scheduled some time in the morning programme on the first day to complete the thumb print process, so that they can start to use the system on day one. If we are unable to set the accounts up prior to the start of term then a packed lunch will be required, but we will communicate with you regarding all of this.

All dietary requirements can be catered for, but please get in touch if you have questions or concerns about the food on offer. Some students still opt to bring a packed lunch regularly, and this is absolutely fine, these students still eat with their peers in the restaurant.

Travel Arrangements

We will not be providing any school buses for our students as is the case in many of our northern academies. We will provide a safe area for bikes to be stored for any students who wish to travel by bike to 2 Queens Square. We will also have staff available outside on duty from 8am and 2.30pm daily to welcome your children.

Although there are still some aspects that need finalising, we hope you find the detail helpful and the overall plan supportive. We will continue to communicate with you until all aspects are clear for everyone.

If you have any questions then please don't hesitate to get in touch via enquiries@riverside.outwood.com and for regular updates on Academy news and events, follow us on: @OARiverside on Twitter and @outwoodriverside on Facebook.

We are looking forward to a successful start in September and wish you all a wonderful summer.

Yours faithfully



Miss Howe
Principal