

July 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

As we approach the end of the school year, I am writing to reflect on what has been an unprecedented 12-18 months and look ahead at how we anticipate our return to school in September 2021 will look.

I would like to start by thanking parents, carers and our school community for your continued support during the challenges caused by the pandemic, including the introduction, removal and reintroduction of measures that have been in place across the country, as well as at school.

Unfortunately, we are advised by the Local Authority and Public Health England that infection rates are currently high within the district and our local community. Our current measures at the Academy have limited the impact this has had on pupils, and we have had far fewer cases than many other schools in the district. However, we have had a Year 9 case recently, which does mean we have pupils within that year group who are currently self-isolating. The impact on staffing is becoming difficult too, as we have seen a number of staff also having to self-isolate due to their children catching Covid or them being a close contact of someone else who has tested positive. Please be patient while we try to adapt to these ongoing disruptions and the affect this may have on teaching and learning. Wherever possible, we will cover lessons using our own staff, but we do occasionally need to bring supply staff into school.

We are in the process of planning to return school back to a more normal way of operating from September 2021. This will, of course, be subject to any guidance or rules issued by the government. However, the following information relates to school opening times, uniform and school meals from September (on the basis that we continue to move out of the restrictions).

School closes on Wednesday 21 July 2021 for the end of the academic year.

The start of the next academic year is as follows:

Nursery and Reception

Mrs Downey will contact families directly to provide information about the start of the year for our youngest children.

Parents will need to drop their child off at the gate and collect them from the classroom door at the end of their session.

Year 1 to Year 6:

Children in these year groups will start at **8.40am on Tuesday 7 September 2021**.

Parents will drop their child off at the gate to the Primary playground from September, rather than come onto the playground. Parents in Years 1, 2 and 3 will be able to collect their children from the classroom door at the end of the school day.

Primary Breakfast Club will start at **7:50am on Wednesday 8 September 2021** for those families who apply for and are given a place. Please look out for a form that will come out before the summer holidays for you to complete and return to us to apply for a place.

Year 7

If your child is in Year 7 in September, they should arrive at school at **8:45am on Tuesday 7 September 2021**. This day will form part of their transition to Secondary school due to it not being possible for us to hold the normal transition events in July.

Year 11

A mixture of online learning and remote lessons will take place on **Tuesday 7 September 2021** and students will NOT be in school on this day. Full time schooling will begin on **Wednesday 8 September 2021 at 8:45am**.

Years 8, 9 and 10

A mixture of online learning and remote lessons will take place on **Tuesday 7 September and Wednesday 8 September 2021** and pupils will NOT be in school on these days. Full time schooling will begin on **Thursday 9 September 2021 at 8:45am**.

On Wednesday 8 September 2021, we will invite all pupils from all year groups who have been elected by their fellow pupils to be Anti Bullying Ambassadors, to attend school to receive training and guidance. We will send an invite with further details to the parents of those pupils involved.

Secondary Breakfast Club

This will begin on **Wednesday 8 September 2021** for pupils who have been identified by the Secondary SEN and Inclusion Team. Parents will be contacted directly to provide further information.

Secondary Day Timings

Thank you to those of you who responded to the consultation about the change to the timings of the school day. It appears from that feedback that the majority of parents are happy with the proposal. We did receive nine responses indicating some concerns and we will be contacting those parents directly to respond. However, as the majority rules on this consultation, the following will apply from September:

Pupils should arrive at school at 8:40am with the first lesson starting at 8:45am. This does mean that pupils will no longer be able to go to the canteen for breakfast before lessons start, so you should ensure your child has had breakfast before they leave home. Breakfast will be available at break times later in the morning for Secondary pupils.

There is no change to the end of the school day and pupils will finish at 3:20pm.

Please be aware that, although we are planning to return to normal school operations, this may change at any time during the foreseeable future, depending on the local and national situation with the pandemic. We, of course, hope to be able to offer a more stable school life to our pupils, parents and staff but we will be subject to any guidance or rules issued by the government or Local Authority. We will do our best to contact parents and keep you up to date if there are any changes to any of this information before September. This includes information about testing in September, which may coincide with children returning to school.

At the moment, neither the Department for Education, Public Health England or the Local Authority have given us any information or direction on whether we will need to test pupils on their return to school after the summer break. However, we have been informed by the Department for Education that we need to be ready to start testing in school if need be. If testing was required, there would be a further staggered return to school of up to three school days, which may impact on the return dates and timings I have detailed in this letter. We hope that this will not be necessary, but we will inform you of any changes required as soon as we become aware of them.

The School Day from September

The timings of lessons and social times will be confirmed before September.

Upper & Lower Foundation

	Session Start	Session Finish
Nursery AM	Doors open at 8.30 and close at 8.40am	Parents can collect from 11.20 until 11.30am
Nursery PM	Doors open at 12.15pm and close at 12.25pm	Parents can collect from 3.05pm until 3.15pm
All Day Pupils	Doors open at 8.30 and close at 8.40am	Parents can collect from 3.05pm until 3.15pm

Primary

	Session Start	Session Finish
Upper Foundation, Years 1 to 6	Doors open at 8.30am and close at 8.40am	Doors open at 2.55pm

Secondary

	Session Start	Session Finish
KS3&4	8.45am	3.20pm

Access to School from September 2021

The school gates will open at 8:30am and close again at 8:50am. The gates will open at 2:45pm at the end of the school day. Nursery parents will be able to access the school when bringing their children and collecting them during the middle of the school day, as the gates will be open to allow public access to Wyke Library.

The vast majority of our pupils live within walking distance of school and most of the remaining pupils travel by bus. Please walk to school where you can as vehicular access is limited. There is a drop off area at the front of school but, when open, this should not be used for parking but for pulling in and allowing your child to get out of the car and walk into school. Please be careful when coming onto site in a car, and when leaving, as this is an area where pupils are walking to and from the building. There are a small number of disabled parking bays, and these are for those parents with a blue badge only; please do not use these spaces if neither you nor your child have a disability.

We continue to request that parents are considerate of residents living in the homes immediately surrounding the Academy when dropping off and collecting children. Please park considerately and drive safely and cautiously around the school site. Please also ensure that you do not park in permit holder bays, on double yellow lines, or in a way that obstructs or causes a nuisance to our neighbours.

Although we are aware that the closure of the drop off car park during the pandemic has caused some inconvenience and, indeed, some frustration among a small minority of parents; the roads around the Academy have generally been much calmer. This decision has also led to a reduction in vehicle usage to drop off and collect children and our site has been a much safer place for our children to enter and exit the school building. We will monitor how changes to operations affect this in September and reserve the right to restrict access to areas of the site if it is felt necessary to do so.

School Uniform

At the point of the lockdown in March 2020, school uniform had improved significantly, especially amongst Secondary pupils, which was the result of a few challenging years of focusing on this. Since we returned to full schooling in March 2021, this has slipped again, particularly with PE uniform and we have had many pupils turning up to school on PE day in inappropriate clothing, far outside what could be considered to be acceptable alternatives to the uniform they are required to wear. Due to the upheaval caused by the pandemic and difficulties parents and pupils have had in being able to go out to stores to buy clothing and equipment, we have tried to show some leniency and understanding of this for the most part. However, from September, we will reintroduce that challenge to anyone who is not complying with the Uniform & Appearance Policy, and we expect to see a return to the standards required.

The Uniform & Appearance Policy has been approved by governors recently and remains as follows:

Primary

- Navy blue Appleton Academy sweatshirt
- white polo shirt and dark or charcoal grey trousers, pinafore dress or skirt.
- Primary children should wear black shoes not trainers

Primary PE Kit

- navy blue polo shirt (with or without an Appleton logo)
- navy shorts
- navy socks or white socks and white trainers

Where uniform doesn't have the Appleton Academy logo, it should be plain and have no other logos.

Secondary

- Navy Appleton Academy blazer
- White shirt
- Appleton Academy tie
- Dark grey or charcoal grey loose fitting, tailored trousers
- Black formal shoes
- Pupils are allowed to wear a navy blue v neck jumper under their blazer (however this rarely required)

Secondary PE Kit

- Navy blue polo shirt (with or without a logo)
- Navy shorts
- Navy jogging bottoms
- Navy sweatshirt
- Navy socks - from Year 7, these will be a plain navy without stripes
- White trainers

Where uniform doesn't have the Appleton Academy logo, it should be plain and have no other logos.

Secondary Uniform Expectations

The following uniform and appearance items are not allowed:

- Tight fitting trousers
- Leggings or joggings
- Black trousers rather than charcoal grey
- A jumper but no blazer
- Black leisure shoes or trainers rather than formal shoes - please see the school website for picture examples.
- Facial piercings or multiple ear piercings
- Overly long or bright polished nails
- Lines or patterns shaved into eyebrows or hair
- Please note that make up should be subtle
- Legging must not be worn for PE, including for dance, unless this is required for a specific qualification performance
- Wearing a coat within the building

Secondary pupils must wear the prescribed uniform including for PE. This means that pupils arriving at school without the correct uniform will be offered loan items and expected to wear them. Not wearing the correct uniform or refusing to wear loan uniform is a behaviour issue and sanctions for incorrect uniform will be enforced for all pupils unless there is an SEN related exemption. Sanctions for pupils will include removal of social times and detentions. Please support school with this, as we will not respond to parental complaints regarding the expectation that pupils wear the advertised uniform or where pupils are clearly in breach of this policy.

Whilst the majority of uniform is available in supermarkets, online and in other shops across the city, parents often prefer to order through the uniform providers. The uniform providers have the correct items in stock and offer discount bundles and options to pay for uniform in manageable instalments.

We are offering a uniform pop-up shop, with our uniform providers, which will take place outside the main building on Monday 12 July 2021. We will text parents to advise you of the specific time you can come to school to purchase uniform on this date. Timings will be managed by year group.

If you have any queries or concerns relating to school opening in September or uniform, please do not hesitate to contact school by phoning the main office on 01274 600550 or emailing info@appletonacademy.co.uk.

School Dinners

The school kitchen serves a range of nutritious food each break for Secondary pupils and for all pupils at lunch. We have continued to subsidise the cost of a school meal, however, increasing food and supply costs mean we have reluctantly made the decision to increase the cost of a Primary meal. Therefore, from September, the cost of a Primary school meal will now be £1.80. This price remains lower than all local authority run schools in Bradford.

Please be aware that meals must be paid for in advance and we will not be able to provide a free meal for a pupil who is not entitled to receive one.

Free School Meals

We are aware that many families will have experienced changes to their financial circumstances as a result of the pandemic and may be eligible for free school meals. This can be checked by contacting the school office with your National Insurance number and the Academy can then support you with the application if you wish to make one. Families eligible for free school meals also currently receive meal vouchers if their child is having to self-isolate due to Covid.



It is well worth checking your eligibility as some people who are eligible are unaware that this is the case. School meals are also managed in school in such a way that no child is identified as being eligible for free school meals when collecting food or drinks, ensuring there is no stigma.

Finally, I would like to close by thanking you once again for your continued support this year; I wish you and your family an enjoyable and restful summer break.

Yours faithfully

Ms H Jones
Executive Headteacher