



20th October, 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

I am writing to you at the end of a busy half term with some key updates and reminders of protocols for next half term. I am pleased to report back to you that despite the challenges the academy has operated well under the new COVID secure guidelines and the risk assessment that we put in place has enabled us to effectively manage the site and avoid any major disruptions to the education of our young people.

We are now embarking on an extended half term and students will return to the academy on **Tuesday 3rd November** and will take part in a Pillar reflection morning until break and then return to normal lessons. It is clear that the rate of infection has risen significantly over the past month and when we return we will have to be extra vigilant. As ever we will only be effective if we work as a team and plan for every eventuality.

Masks

Masks have now been compulsory for two weeks at APA. As London has moved into tier 2, this effectively means that across London all students must now wear masks unless they are exempt with a medically documented reason validated by the academy. Students who are exempt have been issued with a special card, which they carry so that we can identify them easily. Staff have been issuing students with negative points if they do not wear their mask/wear their mask appropriately and parents have been informed of any infringements by letter. This will continue after the holiday so please can you check that you child has two masks before they leave the house in the morning to ensure that they are compliant with this policy. We are still receiving reports of students not wearing masks on buses. If your child travels by public transport please can you speak with them regarding the importance of wearing masks for their health and the health of their families.

Tiered response to school closure

You may be aware that the DFE has asked us to prepare for four tiered responses to school closure. This is effectively how we will respond to each scenario of school closure and **can be found on the COVID section of our website from the 21st October. Please note that these tiers are different to the three tiers of response that have been publicised by the government and relate specifically to school closure rather than local lockdowns.** For clarification, **London is now in a Tier 2 (High Alert) which places us in Tier One of the educational response.** The tiers are outlined below:





<p>Tier 1 School is fully open for all year groups Students must wear masks in enclosed areas outside of classrooms <i>If there are cases of COVID, bubbles may be burst and groups of students will be sent home with work to complete via MS TEAMS which will be remote live teaching where possible</i></p>	<p>Tier 2 Rota of A/B school on a one week on/one week off basis <u>School A</u> Years 12, 10, 7 and half of year nine <u>School B</u> Years 13, 11, 8 and half of year nine <i>The school is to remain open for the children of keyworkers and vulnerable students through community classrooms plus siblings requiring care who are in the opposite rota school</i> <i>When students are on their designated week at home, they will be taught via MS TEAMS which will be remote live teaching where possible</i></p>
<p>Tier 3 The government will inform us which year groups they want to remain in school and which ones will be sent home <i>The school is to remain open for the children of keyworkers and vulnerable students through community classrooms</i> <i>For those students learning at home, they will be taught via MS TEAMS which will be remote live teaching where possible</i></p>	<p>Tier 4 All students learning remotely (same as March 20 onwards) via MS TEAMS <i>which will be remote live teaching where possible</i> <i>The school is to remain open for the children of keyworkers and vulnerable students through community classrooms</i></p>

After the half term break you will be sent an automated letter formally telling you whether your child/children have been allocated to school A or B. Every effort has been made to keep siblings in the same school rota although this is not always possible. In this instance you will be able to formally request that your child attends school with their sibling through our sibling classroom. If you are a parent of a vulnerable student or you are a keyworker you will be asked to apply for a place at community classrooms so that your child can attend full-time. **Please note all of these measures are precautionary, so that we are able to respond quickly to directives given by the government and DFE who will inform us at which tier we will operate with very little notice.**

Digital Strategy

As you will be aware we have moved away from setting work on SMHW and are now using MS TEAMS. We have also initiated training with students on MS TEAMS in terms of access and using it as a learning tool. If we have any instances where students need to learn remotely this will be the main tool for setting work and experiencing live lessons. One lesson that we learnt from our previous lockdown experience, is that students are more successful at home learning when they have access to their own device. After half term we will be working with families to ensure that key students have access to a chromebook. In the first instance, this strategy will prioritise students in exam classes and those who have been formally identified as disadvantaged. Whilst I understand that finances are difficult for many at the moment, I would urge parents to prioritise buying their children a chromebook for Christmas over an expensive phone or gaming device.

Finally, I would like to thank parents for all of your kind words to staff this term. Many of you have written to us with thanks and understanding for the difficulties that we face as a community and staff body in keeping students safe whilst providing them with a positive learning experience. As we



move forward into winter my priority remains to keep the academy open and educate our young people and this is a much easier task with your continued full support.

In the meantime, best wishes

Ms A Downey
PRINCIPAL

Ark Putney Academy
Preparing every student to be a pillar in any community