



Joseph Leckie
Academy

18th May 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

Firstly, I would like to send my best wishes and hope that you are all staying safe. These are exceptionally challenging times for us all, and we know all too well how COVID-19 has affected and will continue to affect all of our lives over the coming days and weeks.

As we continue with home schooling, I would like to thank all parents/carers and students for all your efforts in completing your work remotely. This has been a steep learning curve for all of us. We continue to set work via SharePoint and those of you who have struggled with the use of technology have informed us and we have provided printed packs of resources for you to work through. This also includes a range of non-academic activities via the House Co-coordinators, literacy and well-being activities.

Please continue to ask your child to respond to the emails sent by their tutors on a weekly basis to ensure that your child is safe and well. This is an avenue for them to express any concerns that they may have about their work or personal circumstances, so that we can further support them with their mental health and well-being, as well as their academic progress. Can I remind you that, if you have any concerns or want any clarification as many of you have done so please contact their teacher or tutor or the Academy postbox postbox@josephleckieacademy.co.uk. All staff email addresses are available on the website.

Teachers, tutors and support staff have been working tirelessly behind the scenes setting work, contacting and supporting students throughout this period and I think it is important to thank all the staff behind the scenes who are working tirelessly to support all of our students.

Clarification regarding the possible reopening of Joseph Leckie Academy to some students from June:

Many of you will have heard the Prime Minister's address on Sunday 10th May and subsequently seen more information from the Department for Education during last week. The guidance clearly stated that we will not be re-opening secondary schools for most students before September. However, we know you have seen in the news that schools may partially reopen from 1 June to year 10 and year 12 students, **but only if** the government thinks it is safe to do so. This is unlikely to be on a full-time basis, but will allow some students to get some face-to-face contact with teachers in order to assess them to further support their home learning.

We are working towards this, but are waiting for further guidance/clarification from the Government regarding secondary schools. This will be different to primary schools and vary from region to region and we will follow guidance from the Local Authority as well as the government. Whatever decision is made, this will take some time to organise to ensure the safety of all. Therefore we are unable to give you a date when this will commence at the present time.

It continues to be a very unsettling time for us all, but rest assured that we are going to be doing everything we can to make sure we are ready to receive these year groups, but only when it is safe for our Academy to reopen.

We are creating a detailed action plan and a thorough Risk Assessment in preparation for when the government feels it is safe to re-open and we need to ensure the safety and welfare of all our students and staff are paramount. We will share our plans with you as soon as possible so you know what the reopening will look like in practice for your child if they are in Year 10 or 12 or are vulnerable. This is a list of some of the precautions and changes to protocol we are considering and likely to take; there will be more when we get greater clarification:

- Small class sizes - mainly one to one conversations or small groups, sitting apart, for example working on SharePoint lessons whilst teachers assess the learning that has gone on at home

- Students remaining in the same room for all activities
- Limiting the blocks and classrooms students will use
- Reducing and staggering break times and lunchtimes, these will need to be closely supervised so students stay apart and different pick-up and drop-off times
- Students in at prescribed times and days – only a small number being invited in on site at any one time
- Increased cleaning, increased hand sanitizing stations at entrances to buildings and hand sanitizers and regular washing throughout the day
- Parents will be encouraged not to send their child to school via public transport, they should ideally walk, cycle or be dropped off and parents should not wait outside the Academy
- Social distancing measures e.g. students must not congregate outside the Academy or on the yard/outside the Academy
- Keeping students and staff with coronavirus symptoms at home
- Students with symptoms will be sent home and told to isolate until tested and only if negative will they be allowed to return to school
- Changes to consequences should students not abide by these and place others at risk

Please note: If your child is **clinically extremely vulnerable**, or **living with someone who is in this group**, they **should not come back to school** and should continue home learning. If your child is clinically vulnerable (but not clinically extremely vulnerable), you should follow medical advice to decide if they should come back to school. Please refer to [government guidance](#) for further details of these groups.

I want to reassure you that we are not going to be pressuring any student to come into school. We will keep you updated with all our preparations for making sure the Academy is as safe as possible, so you and your child can make an informed decision about whether to come in on the day(s) or weeks stated when we contact you.

We are continuing to liaise regularly with vulnerable students and the children of critical workers where these are struggling or at risk at home and will continue speak to parents in person about how we can support you further and as and when it is safe for your child to return to school. We know some employers will be encouraging you to return to work, but we are not in a position right now to extend places to other students until we receive further government guidance.

There is much to do before we can ensure that the Academy is safe for our students and staff, we need more clarity and information on testing and tracing locally and how we will test students on their arrival to school. When we know more, we will be in touch with you with specific details of which Year 10 and/or 12 groups are to come in on which days. We will also provide clear and specific guidance on what they must and must not do for their safety and that of other students and staff.

In the meantime it is vitally important that your child continues with their programme of learning for each subject. As and when your child does come back into school their teachers will need to assess what they have done and what they have understood.

If you have any general questions or if your child has any specific difficulties or if we can support you in any other way, please contact postbox@josephleackieacademy.co.uk or go onto the website for specific staff contact details.

Kind regards,

Rachel Cook
Acting Principal