

Dear Parent/Carer

A year ago I wrote to you and my message was it will be great to get the students back into school and get things back to normal for them. How wrong could I have been? Whilst we have made every effort to retain our broad curriculum and the activities we offered, it cannot be doubted that the measures have significantly impacted on our students' experience this year.

Having said that, you will see from our newsletter, which can be found on our website, that we have managed to deliver an extensive range of opportunities for our students and the enthusiastic manner with which they responded to them showed that such opportunities have been sorely missed.

I am so proud of the staff at John Spence for doing their very best for all of the students, sometimes working in extremely challenging circumstances, but always maintaining great provision in a climate of care and support for the young people in their care. The students have also been a credit to themselves and the school and responded with little complaint to the measures we have put in place and adopted throughout the year. Like the staff, they have shown great resilience and dealt with a whole host of issues that have arisen due to the pandemic. I would also like to thank you for your continued support and understanding, particularly with homeschooling and short notice phone calls that your child will need to come home to self-isolate.

So to revisit my message from a year ago we are very much looking forward to students returning in September to a school that will be much more normal than last year. Over the summer we are conducting an extensive works programme that includes a new building for the North East Partnership SCITT, a new Engagement and Behaviour Centre as well as upgrades to lighting in the Arts and Sports block and refresh of the decoration in the main building. This work is intended to create an attractive and motivational environment where students can thrive. We will also be constructing an outdoor seating area with a canopy which will be ready in October so that we can further improve our lunchtime service and allow all students to remain on site at lunchtime, as has been the case this year. I know that students will be pleasantly surprised by the changes upon their return.

Updates for September 2021

The School Day

The start and end of the school day will remain the same, but there will be tweaks to some timings:

Registration	08.40 – 09.00
Period 1	09.00 – 10.00
Period 2	10.00 – 11.00
Break	11.00 – 11.15
Period 3	11.15 – 12.15
Period 4	12.15 – 13.15
Lunch	13.15 – 14.00
Period 5	14.00 – 15.00

Students are expected to be on the school site by 08.35.

Mobile Phones

Mobile phones cannot be used at any point whilst on the school site. Students should switch them off and put them in their bags as soon as they arrive at the school gates and should not be taken out again until they leave through the school gates at the end of the day. Any phone seen will be confiscated.

Telephone · 0191 296 1432

Preston Road · North Shields · Tyne and Wear · NE29 9PU

jschs.office@ntlp.org.uk · www.johnspence.org.uk

Behaviour Policy

I have mentioned in my updates that we will be launching a new Behaviour Policy in September. It is straightforward to understand and will ensure that no student can routinely disrupt the learning or harm the welfare of others. Please do have a look on our website to familiarise yourself.

Uniform

I have enclosed an updated version of our uniform standards. Please read these carefully and ensure that your child arrives at school in the correct uniform every day. If there is an issue on a given day, then please provide your child with a note and we will provide them with the correct uniform in school. There may be occasions where we send students home to change into the correct uniform.

PE kit should be worn to school on the days your child has PE. Shorts are compulsory, but you can opt for the John Spence leggings or training pants, particularly for the colder weather. Your child should not wear any other leggings, training pants or joggers to school.

I have mentioned on numerous occasions that we do have a uniform fund for families struggling with the cost and I am pleased to say that some have taken up the offer. Please do not be embarrassed if this is the case because we do not want uniform to be a barrier for a child coming to school; just let your child's Head of Year or Mrs Blair know and we will sort things out for you.

Covid-19 Measures

The Government published plans for students returning in September this week. Measures are now primarily focused on ventilation and good hygiene and our plans will reflect this. You will also have heard that students will be tested for Covid in school upon their return meaning that we will have to slightly stagger our start. **You will receive full details during the summer holidays of the arrangements and the specific time that your child should return to school.** We are aiming to get through the first tests as quickly as we can so that the students are back in classes as soon as possible. Draft arrangements are as follows:

Monday 6th September

Teacher Training Day

Tuesday 7th September

08.30 – 11.00 Year 7 testing (remain in school for the day)

11.00 – 13.00 Year 11 testing (remain in school for the day)

13.00 – 15.00 Year 10 testing (return home after being tested)

Wednesday 8th September

Years 7, 10 and 11 in school as normal

08.30 – 11.00 Year 9 testing (remain in school for the day)

11.00 – 13.00 Year 8 testing (remain in school for the day)

Thursday 9th September – Monday 13th September

Second tests will take place, but students will be in school as normal.

When we contact you in the summer we will also inform you of our decision around the use of face coverings in school and the arrangements for any child that tested positive, thankfully we will no longer be sending home groups of students who are close contacts.

If your child tests positive or displays symptoms anytime up to 5pm on Sunday 18th July, then please contact the school office via email as we will still need to identify close contacts at this point, after which NHS Test and Trace will take over the role.

That's quite a lot to take in, but as ever we will send reminders and updates whenever it is necessary so that you have a clear picture of what will be happening. If you do have any queries, then do please contact the school office who will be able to direct your call or email to someone who can help.

Finally, can I thank you all again for your trust and support this year, I know that things have not always been easy, but by working together as a community we have reached the end of a turbulent year and will emerge even stronger when we return in September.

I wish you all a healthy, relaxing and enjoyable summer.

Best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Heath', written on a light-colored background.

Jonathan Heath

Headteacher