



# HEANOR GATE SCIENCE COLLEGE

“Develop all learners to achieve their full potential”  
“Create a culture of aspiration”

Principal: **Mr S Huntington**



21 July 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

## Re: End of term reflection & information for September

We want to start by thanking all of you for your fantastic support throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. Having your child move up to secondary school is a daunting prospect but coupled with the issues around transition, bubbles and the pandemic in general we appreciate how difficult the experience will have been. We hope that you recognise we have tried to maximise every possible opportunity through our transition days for your child to experience life at Heanor Gate and hopefully the large volume of students signed up for summer school will thrive off the experiences we have planned next week.

As a school we are immensely proud of the work which has taken place this year. The staff have gone above and beyond to ensure that our young people never lost out educationally as victims of the pandemic and the opportunities our students have experienced through the 'Step Up' initiative has been unbelievable. The students have shown resilience in abundance and their willingness to engage, adapt and support one another has been outstanding. As we break up for a well-earned rest over the summer we wanted to get in touch to confirm some of the plans for September and the year ahead. However, if we have learnt one thing from the pandemic, it is that plans can change in a heartbeat. Therefore whilst we have tried to be organised and put plans in place these as always are subject to change if we need to respond to new guidance. So that you are as informed as possible, please find below a synopsis of some key information:

### 1. TESTING & SEPTEMBER RETURN DATES

At present the future advice around testing is unknown. What we do know is that there is no expectation for children to test at home over the summer but that every child must be tested in school prior to starting back in September. This will mean a staggered start to the term. As your children have not been subject to testing previously, we will ensure that the whole process is as supportive as possible. For now, there is no need to panic and all you need to be aware of is that your child will be supported to conduct a LFT on-site during their induction day on Friday 3rd September. There is nothing to worry about, but for more information we put together a testing advice video during the pandemic which may be of use:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1cAPBqtAWpDeefiKzzWUWY6Kbdd4a0NOD/view?usp=sharing>

As you can see, we have prioritised the start of the year for new students arriving with us in September. Therefore, as part of the staggered start your child will have ample time to adjust to their routines prior to the rest of the students returning back.

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Year group	Date of on-site test	Planned start to school term
Year 12	INSET Thursday 2 September - am	Monday 6 September
Year 13	INSET Thursday 2 September - pm	Monday 6 September
Year 7	INSET Friday 3 September - am	Friday 3rd (will stay in school following test)
Year 11	INSET Friday 3 September - pm	Monday 6 September
Year 10	Monday 6 September - am	Tuesday 7 September
Year 9	Monday 6 September - pm	Tuesday 7 September
Year 8	Tuesday 7 September - am	Wednesday 8 September

## 2. TIMINGS OF THE SCHOOL DAY

We have decided that the previous Wednesday bespoke timings will be permanently phased out of the school day. We also have returned to one break time for all year groups, but kept numerous dining facilities to support the calm atmospheres which have been afforded due to less children within crowded spaces. Timings for the school day will now be as follows:

Time	Event	Notes
08.45	Deadline for students to be on site	
08.50	Tutor time	
09.10	Period 1	
10.10	Period 2	
11.10	Morning break	New gym - Y7 and 8, Hall, Y9, 10 & 11, S block common room Y12 & 13
11.25	Period 3	
12.25	Period 4 a	Lunch for Y8 & 10 (hall), lunch for Y12 (S block common room)
12.55	Period 4 b	Lunch for Y7 (hall)
13.25	Period 4 c	Lunch for Y9 & 11 (hall), lunch for Y13 (S block common room)
13.55	Period 5	
14.55	End school day	

## 3. ATTENDANCE

School attendance has been proven to have a huge impact on achieving good grades. The government guidance around isolation and contact tracing will be updated for schools imminently and we will update you in due course. Every student at this school is expected to maintain an attendance level of at least 97%, in line with the Government's expectations. Whilst it is appreciated that children are unwell from time to time, and there may be exceptional circumstances for absences, especially during the pandemic, please think carefully about taking your child out of school as persistent absence is proven to have a significant impact upon a child's educational attainment. We will continue to work with the local authority in terms of tackling persistent absence and issue fixed penalty notices where appropriate.

### TERM TIME HOLIDAYS

Since September 2013, holidays in term time are no longer authorised unless they are for exceptional circumstances. This is Government law in partnership with the Department for Education. We take any incidents of unauthorised holiday very seriously.

#### 4. PUNCTUALITY

Being on time is not only an essential life skill, but also something which has a huge impact on learning. Being on time to school provides a positive routine which sets students up for the day ahead and being on time for lessons allows teachers to maximise time available to help students learn.

Students who are late will be sanctioned as per the school's Attendance Policy.

#### 5. BEHAVIOUR SYSTEMS

Strong discipline has always been a key driver for the success of our school and students on the whole behave really well.

The school has an achievement and behaviour monitoring system to enable us to reward students' success and monitor incidents of poor behaviour across the school. The achievement points are distributed by all staff in recognition of students' progress across a range of key 'Behaviour for Learning' attributes. Behaviour points are similarly distributed by staff when behaviour falls short of basic expectations. On these occasions, students will also receive a sanction which is consistent with the behaviour issue in question and this will be communicated by the Teacher and/or Achievement Leader.

In September we will continue to reward those who follow school rules and act with courtesy and equally we will continue to sanction poor behaviour.

#### 6. UNIFORM & EQUIPMENT

At Heanor Gate we pride ourselves on being prepared for school and looking extremely smart and ready to learn. It is paramount that your son/daughter comes to school in the correct uniform. The uniform is comprehensive and we will not apologise for maintaining high standards of appearance. For a useful guide on what is acceptable and what is not, please follow this link:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1wl25n5U47-J7oP3s9YMiWUfiKeF5mvo2/view?usp=sharing>

All Spencer Academy Trust schools operate some entry level standards that are consistent across all of the schools, these will remain in place and include:

1. No jewellery is to be worn, with the exception of one stud in each earlobe. No visible necklaces, bracelets, rings or other piercings (including tongue piercings or those in the Helix or Tragus) will be allowed.
2. Students will only be permitted to wear 'subtle makeup' but will not be permitted to wear nail varnish or polish. In addition, no extreme or unnatural hair colouring or styles will be permitted.

These Spencer Academy Trust standards are non-negotiable so please ensure you do not send your child to school with any prohibited items of jewellery or make up. Failure to meet the correct uniform standards will result in your child needing to be collected from school to rectify any issues.

It is essential that all students have the correct equipment so they are 'ready to learn.' Our minimum expectation is that all students will always have a pen, pencil, ruler, a maths set and calculator. Equally we expect this equipment to be carried in an appropriate school bag. We provide all students with a white board and board pen. We expect students to have these with them each day.

Students will be responsible for their school books and will need to bring the correct set of books to and from school on a daily basis. We have encouraged students to be 'proud' of their presentation and this allows students to share their great work with parents and carers at home.

## 7. USE OF MOBILE PHONES

*As of September 1 2019 the Spencer Academies Trust will be enforcing a zero tolerance on students' use of mobile phones on the school site at any point during the school day.* We fully understand the need for students to carry phones for their safety when travelling to and from school, however, it is not necessary for mobile phones to be switched on during the school day. The school will hold a firm stance on this and will confiscate any phones which are visible. The advice for any student bringing a mobile phone on to the school site is to ensure it is switched off and stored in their school bag. Repeat offences will be taken very seriously.

For more information on the recent research carried out by Onward into the impact of mobile phone usage in schools please follow this link: <https://parentsandteachers.org.uk/the-pte-phone-free-school-campaign/>

## 8. 'CASHLESS' & 'PAPERLESS' SCHOOL

The school successfully became a cashless school from September 2017 and since then all transactions (school meals, trips etc.) have been paid for via ParentPay. The fingerprint system will be fully sanitised in between services so that there is no risk of cross contamination between bubbles. If you need any further information on this please contact the school.

We have come a long way in our aim to become a more eco-efficient school, and as such, we are now using email as our method of communication to home. For those of you who use Twitter, please follow us @HeanorGateSC for updates on school's key events and notices.

## 9. SYNERGY

From September we will be moving to a new system which will greatly improve communication between school and home. In time we will be launching student and parent portals which will allow you to access live attendance, behaviour and achievement information for your child, as well as centralising communications. However, in the first instance you may simply notice that some of the emails that you receive from school make reference to 'Synergy'. We will be in touch in the new term to give you further information.

## 10. LEARNING @ HEANOR GATE EVENTS

Given the uncertainty around what September will look like, we are yet to decide whether these events will take place remotely or in person. The events are scheduled for w/c Monday 13 September and once guidance becomes clearer we will make appropriate arrangements to release dates for these as soon as possible.

There is an evening planned for Thursday 30 September designed to invite parents in and discuss how your children have settled in. We hope that this evening will go ahead as planned and look forward to it.

Mrs Wagg will be in touch with further details of what September will look like for your child. We wish you a pleasant summer break and look forward to returning in the new academic year where hopefully we can push on past the pandemic and return to as 'normal' a functioning school as possible.

Yours sincerely



Mr S Huntington  
Executive Principal



Mr M Jones  
Senior Vice Principal