



Dear Parent/ Carer,

December 2021

We approach yet another end of term somewhat unsure of what the future holds. As I write this the Prime Minister has just communicated that we are now at Level 4 in our response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Students and staff are already wearing masks in all communal areas, gatherings such as assemblies are limited in school, cleaning regimes are enhanced and all classrooms are well ventilated. We continue to place safety for all as our number one priority and review our processes regularly.

You will have already received a communication regarding the return to school for students. Once again, we will have a testing base up and running in our Sports Hall. Students should come for their test, if consent is given and then go straight home. They will then start back to school the following day. The plan below should; make this quite clear:

Wednesday 5th January

Year	Tutor Groups	Arrive Time	Depart Time	Entrance / Exit	Reason
11	Crescent and Trinity	9.15am	10.30am	Main Reception	Lateral Flow Test
11	Royal and Loxdale	10.30am	12.00pm	Main Reception	Lateral Flow Test
12	ALL	1.00pm	2.00pm	Main Reception	Lateral Flow Test
13	ALL	2.00pm	3.00pm	Main Reception	Lateral Flow Test

Thursday 6th January

Year	Tutor Groups	Arrive Time	Depart Time	Entrance / Exit	Reason
9	Crescent and Trinity	9.00am	10.30am	Main Reception	Lateral Flow Test
9	Royal and Loxdale	10.30am	12.00pm	Main Reception	Lateral Flow Test
10	Crescent and Trinity	1.00pm	2.00pm	Main Reception	Lateral Flow Test
10	Royal and Loxdale	2.00pm	3.00pm	Main Reception	Lateral Flow Test

Years 11, 12 and 13 attend school as normal.

Friday 7th January

Year	Tutor Groups	Arrive Time	Depart Time	Entrance / Exit	Reason
7	Crescent and Trinity	9.00am	10.30am	Main Reception	Lateral Flow Test
7	Royal and Loxdale	10.30am	12.00pm	Main Reception	Lateral Flow Test
8	Crescent and Trinity	1.00pm	2.00pm	Main Reception	Lateral Flow Test
8	Royal and Loxdale	2.00pm	3.00pm	Main Reception	Lateral Flow Test

Years 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13 attend school as normal.

From Monday 10th January, all students in all years are required to be in school for a normal academy day starting at 8.40am and finishing at 3.00pm.

Since September, we have been able to run our academy in a new kind of 'normal' way and it has been simply wonderful to see students moving around classrooms, doing practical subjects and performing. I am incredibly proud of our Performing Arts staff and students whose hard work and commitment meant we were the first OAT academy to fling open its doors and welcome an audience to a show. The emotion of the Saturday night show will stay with me a long time. It was simply sensational – well done, once again, to all involved.



Enrichment is a huge part of our academy and the array of clubs, visits and fixtures that have taken place has been impressive to say the least. Mr Saxon continues to lead the way in all things green with his gardening club crew and the PE dept. have thrown themselves into netball tournaments, dodge ball events, badminton competitions and football fixtures. I always enjoy watching the Post 16 football academy fixtures when I am able to, as our boys play the game in such a good spirit, definitely one that the adults could learn from.

There have also been a large number of visits that we have been able to organise this term. I spoke with a lot of staff and students who went to see Cinderella, (oh no you didn't – oh yes I did) and, from all accounts, this was simply magical. I am hugely impressed by the staff and students who took part in the Big Sleep Out organised by St. Basils. Having done this myself a few years ago I know just how hard this event is and just how necessary. We can talk to young people about our values, in this case empathy, but they also have to live them!

We have, once again, opened our doors to visitors, one of the first being 'Adventure Man' who spoke with all year groups about his runs across North America and Asia. It was so powerful seeing our values put into action by somebody who had been told he wouldn't ever be able to play sport never mind run thousands of kilometres. We were also able to welcome our governors back into our academy and I was thrilled that we could host a governance morning in early December. Governors spent time with me on gate duty, in tutor time, visiting lessons, meeting with students and observing social time. This is crucial if they are to effectively challenge what we do and I am very grateful for their time and support.

We will be reviewing our risk assessment in light of changing guidance and I will make sure that this is on our website. Please do contact the academy if you have any concerns regarding our procedures, rest assured, we will continue to do all that we can to ensure safety for all remains our number one concern.

I do hope that you get a well-deserved rest this festive season. Be safe and remember if you need help please do let us know.

Like all head teachers I stand on the shoulders of giants and if I may, I would like to leave the last word to our staff. Throughout the pandemic they have been magnificent, working tirelessly to change working practice at the drop of a hat, develop new skills and go above and beyond to show just how much they care about the students and the community that we serve. To all the staff I simply say, yet again – thank you, well done, now go home to your families and have a rest!

Yours sincerely

A. Price
Principal

Year 7

What a fabulous first term year 7 have had. The first day of the year is a stand out moment, coming in looking so smart and so eager to begin their GSA journey. More recently we have had some great trips organised for year 7 – A History visit to Worcester Cathedral and a Maths and ICT trip to Bletchley Park in Milton Keynes. All students that went had a great time and conducted themselves so well, representing the academy in a very positive way. Year 7 have also had a Christmas Disco last week, which was such a brilliant atmosphere and a great way to end the Autumn term.

Many year 7's have also contributed to the shoebox appeal for the Salvation Army and West Bromwich Foodbank this term, which really shows their kindness and community spirit

Year 8

Arambo Lutangazo (8R1 and member of the Wolves Academy), played in a national tournament for Wolves in which his team secured 3rd place with a win against Man City! Miss Khan deserves a special mention because of her immense personal contributions to the food bank project!

Year 8 Environmental Protection officers have successfully started the recycling initiative, the electricity saving initiative, (by touring the school and turning off unused lights and projectors), and now the 'better spaces' initiative which sees them clearing up the mess in their social space with designated litter pickers!



Year 9

As we approach the Spring term, year 9 will be focussing on their KS4 options and have already begun the build up to this process. This is an exciting step for students as they begin to take greater ownership of their curriculum and embark on the further development of their learning journeys here at GSA. So far we have completed student voice to gather current thoughts from our year 9 cohorts on potential pathways they may choose and have also received external assemblies regarding making informed choices, independent decision making and raising aspirations. Coming in the spring term students will take part in further taster sessions to give a greater understanding and awareness of subjects and also attending our options evening where we would encourage parents and carers to attend also to gather as much information as possible.



Year 10

Nuradin Abdullahi 10T1 created the first One World in One School presentation about his native Somalia. He created slides that all students saw in e-briefing which included cultural information (food and drink), the language spoken (with some examples) and also the location and what the climate is like. He did a tremendous job and was presented with a Head teacher's commendation for his efforts by Mr Price.

U16 Netball team which contains members of Year 10 and 11 have won the Sandwell District League which is no mean feat! Congratulations to all girls involved.

Year 11

As part of their Sports Leadership Qualification Miss Whitworth's PE group went into Primary Schools and delivered sports sessions. The Primary Schools were amazed at the maturity and confidence the Year 11 students demonstrated whilst leading their sessions. Several of the Primary Schools contacted the academy to both thank and praise these students for a thoroughly enjoyable session. Well done to all the students involved.

Post 16 News

There have been several outstanding moments this term within Salter Sixth with a huge number of students to congratulate. Below are some highlights:

Music Performances

Post 16 RSL Music students performed in two music concerts, one at South and City College whilst the other was held here in The Green Room Theatre. Both concerts were well attended and showcased the vast talents of our students.



Enrichment and Qualifications

All Post 16 students have started their Well-Being Wednesday options this term, taking part in a variety of activities to include Football, Dance, Sports Leadership, LAMDA, Business Enterprise and First Aid. We are looking at how to expand these options further in the New Year to give students as many opportunities as possible to develop relationships and experiences following Covid closures whilst also developing enrichment opportunities within the curriculum.

Year 12 have also started their EPQ and LIBF qualifications. Students studying LIBF have conducted their first mock assessment whilst the level of questions being produced by the EPQ students is looking very positive for some fantastic projects.

Mentoring

Students have been participating in a number of mentoring programmes to help improve their knowledge, understanding and attainment. These include sessions led by University of Birmingham Undergraduate students and Miss Leydon in Science.

Loudmouth Script

A group of 10 students represented our academy in a student voice with Loudmouth Theatre Company on Friday 10th December to help inform a script to a play which is being made for students across Sandwell in the new year.

YEAR 13 GEOGRAPHY RESIDENTIAL 23rd and 24th November

On the 23rd and 24th November, the six Year 13 Geography students travelled to Criccieth, Wales, to complete their fieldwork for their coastal management coursework. The students were absolutely brilliant and worked in two teams to collect their data, such as measuring beach profiles and sediment shape and size. They also did some bipolar analysis of the coastal environment and bravely conducted some surveys with local residents. It was a wonderful opportunity for the Year 13s to engage in some 'real-world' Geography!

SIXTH FORM ATTEND THE LORD MAYOR'S QUIZ – 25th November 2021

On the 25th November, six courageous Year 12 and 13 students competed in the Lord Mayor's Quiz at the University of Birmingham – a high-profile and prestigious event that brings together many colleges and Sixth Forms across the city, with a cash prize and the Lord Mayor of Birmingham, Muhammed Afzal, formally opening the quiz. Paavan, Mayesha, Monique, Govindpreet, Amandeep and Nijendra worked brilliantly as a team against some very tough competition. The Salter Smarties gave it their all and really did GSA proud, coming 23rd overall.

Merry Christmas from all at GSA

