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12th September 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

Welcome back to a new school year with a special welcome to our new year 7 students and parents joining us for the first time this year.

Despite the challenges that COVID19 related restrictions brings in terms of management around the school and available facilities, all staff have been very impressed with how our students have settled back into school life. It has been a week of children smiling and laughing, learning in classrooms and socialising with their friends at break and lunch times. Lessons have been purposeful and the enthusiasm that our pupils have displayed towards learning and the new environment is awesome. There are of course some things we have needed to tweak in terms of using facilities and we will continue to do this in order to try and give everyone the best possible learning environment under the current restrictions.

We live in ever changing times, with 'The Rule of 6' introduced this week and local restrictions in Birmingham, Sandwell and Solihull being put in place. As a result of the recent restrictions I can now inform you that as of Monday 14th September we have introduced a 'Mask to Move' initiative and have made it mandatory for all students and staff to wear face masks in school when moving around the site, outside of classrooms, such as corridors and communal areas. Please contact your child's Head of Year where you feel there is a medical reason for exemption from wearing a face covering. Please see further guidance about face masks below:

- Students must supply their own face mask
- Face masks are NOT to be worn in lessons by students
- Students must remove their face mask before entering any teaching space, place their face mask in a sealable plastic bag and this plastic bag must be placed in their school bag
- Students must sanitise their hands before putting their face mask on and after removing their face mask
- Damp face masks must not be worn
- Face masks must be disposed of at home and not in school
- Students are not permitted to share face masks
- Face masks are mandatory on public transport
- Students are not permitted to use their face mask for any other purpose other than to cover their face
- Any student who removes or touches another student's face mask will be faced with severe sanctions
- Students are not permitted to draw on their face masks
- Face masks must not contain any offensive logos or wording

A face covering should:

- cover your nose and mouth while allowing you to breathe comfortably
- fit comfortably but securely against the side of the face
- be secured to the head with ties or ear loops
- be made of a material that you find to be comfortable and breathable, such as cotton
- unless disposable, it should be able to be washed with other items of laundry according to fabric washing instructions and dried without causing the face covering to be damaged

When wearing a face covering you should:

- wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser before putting a face covering on
- avoid wearing on your neck or forehead
- avoid touching the part of the face covering in contact with your mouth and nose, as it could be contaminated with the virus
- change the face covering if it becomes damp
- avoid taking it off and putting it back on a lot in quick succession

When removing a face covering:

- wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser before removing
- only handle the straps, ties or clips
- do not give it to another pupil to use
- if single-use, dispose of it carefully in a residual waste bin and do not recycle
- if reusable, wash it in line with manufacturer's instructions at the highest temperature appropriate for the fabric
- wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser once removed

I hope that you will agree this is a sensible measure and will add a layer of security that we feel is necessary to keep pupils and staff as safe as possible.

Virtual Open Day

In line with our COVID19-safe protocols, we are not going to be able to hold a face to face open day for prospective parents and students. We are therefore holding virtual open mornings and a virtual open evening next week. More information can be found on our website <https://www.arena-birmingham.academy/open-evening/>. It would be nice to include some positive quotes (all will be anonymous) from current parents about your experiences of the school, or from your child(ren) about their favourite aspect of Arena Academy. If you are happy to contribute a comment, please email me on RMann@arena-birmingham.academy by Tuesday 15th September.

A Note of Thanks

I would like to finish by passing on a note of thanks to your child's teachers and staff at school. It has been a monumental task to reorganise the school to meet the government's COVID19-safe requirements, and has required many staff to go well above and beyond what might normally be reasonably expected. As a staff we are totally committed to ensuring that the school is not only safe for our students but is exciting and where excellent Teaching and Learning is at the forefront of everything we do. While a lot of organisational things may have changed within the school, our commitment to providing the best education possible very much remains. We look forward together with enthusiasm and optimism to the future; thank you for your ongoing support.

Yours sincerely,



Mr R Mann
Headteacher