



3<sup>rd</sup> July 2020

Dear Parents & Carers

You may be aware that the Department for Education has now published its guidance to schools on the plans for students from September. We are delighted that these plans extend to all students and the intention is that every student, in every year group, should return to school after the summer break.

At Axe Valley Academy we are committed to facilitating this. We could not appreciate more the support that we have received from parents and carers in engaging in remote learning, however I am sure that we are all in agreement that this has been no replacement for the face to face teaching that we can offer in school. We continue to be acutely aware of the importance of our students being amongst their peers for their wellbeing. We have seen Year 10 return in a respectful and hardworking way, and it has been a joy to see them being able to interact again safely with each other. We can't wait to welcome our students back into a vibrant school community with all the opportunities that this offers.

We are very grateful to the Year 10 parents and carers who have encouraged and supported their children back to school over recent weeks. It has been invaluable not only for the face to face teaching that has been able to take place but also in allowing their teachers to build a clear picture of the learning that has taken place during school closure. I feel that our teachers are in the best possible position to be able to prepare for September and the GCSE examinations.

We would also like to thank all the parents and carers in Years 7-9 who continue to support their children into school for meetings. We continue to enjoy seeing everyone again and want to support as many of our students as possible in returning in a confident way in September. If you are concerned about your child's return to school in September and would like a meeting in school, please don't hesitate to contact school to arrange a meeting.

Clearly, for September, we will have to make changes to our 'normal' way of working. We have been impressed by the way in which our students have adapted to any changes we have to put in place, and we are certain this will continue. Coronavirus remains a very real threat within our communities and as such Axe Valley will have to ensure there are multiple layers of safety and control measures in place to minimise the risk and allow your children to return to school in September with confidence.

The published Government guidance is wide reaching and complex. As such I'd like to reassure you that my priority now is to work through this guidance and look at safe solutions to the challenges this presents for a rural school with older buildings. I am certain these challenges are not insurmountable, and I will continue to share our plans with the

Chard Street, Axminster, Devon EX13 5EA  
Tel: 01297 32146 Email: [admin@axevalley.devon.sch.uk](mailto:admin@axevalley.devon.sch.uk) Web: [www.axevalley.devon.sch.uk](http://www.axevalley.devon.sch.uk)



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whole community over the coming weeks so that you have a clear sense of what the return in September will look like. This letter is not designed to provide detailed plans but instead to confirm that Axe Valley Academy will be open for all students in September and allow clarification on some points that will help you to prepare for the return.

### **Results Day**

Results day will be on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> August. A separate letter will be sent to the students of Year 10 and Year 11 next week outlining the details for the on-site collection of results.

### **Attendance**

Over recent months the Government has rightly supported parental choice surrounding school attendance. From September it is clear that all students should be in school unless there are documented medical reasons related to shielding. If you have any concerns about this please don't hesitate to contact our Inclusion Officer Liz Jackson

[ljackson@axevalley.devon.sch.uk](mailto:ljackson@axevalley.devon.sch.uk).

### **Changes to September Return Dates**

Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> September and Friday 4<sup>th</sup> September are calendared training days for staff at Axe Valley Academy. Due to coronavirus preventing transition days to Axe Valley for our new Year 7 intake, **we will be opening to new Year 7 only** on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> September for a transition day. All other year groups, 8-11, will return to school on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> September.

### **Uniform**

We are very aware that parents may often use the summer holidays as an opportunity to purchase new uniform. We would like to confirm that all students will be expected to be in full school uniform in September. Attached is the school uniform code. Please do pay particular attention to the section on hair colour, make up, piercings and school shoes as these are areas that can cause some conflict at the beginning of a new year. Please contact Jon Scott, Assistant Headteacher ([jscott@axevalley.devon.sch.uk](mailto:jscott@axevalley.devon.sch.uk)) if you have any queries surrounding uniform in advance as we want to avoid conflict and allow students to settle back into their studies as seamlessly as possible at the beginning of term. We can't wait to welcome everyone back into our school community representing Axe Valley proudly and in the correct uniform.

### **Transport**

We currently have no news about how school transport will operate under the new guidance, however we hope to hear from the Local Authority over the coming days and we will forward this information to you as soon as we receive it.

### **Holidays Abroad**

I know that many parents are now making plans for travel abroad as the restrictions around foreign travel are easing. As you will be aware, in some cases there are still two-week quarantine periods for people returning to the UK. We sincerely hope that your plans will not interfere with your children returning to school in September with their peers, however if you feel your plans could cause any problems with starting the new term can you contact us to discuss this at your earliest convenience.

I am certain that you will have many questions that you would like answered and I ask for your patience at this time. I will work through the guidance with the staff at Axe Valley to formulate clear plans and communicate these with you as quickly as possible.

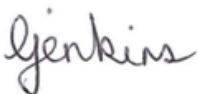
Again, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to this community. I am very proud to lead Axe Valley Academy in such a wonderful community with the support and incredible staff, parents, carers and children. With two weeks left to go, we will work tirelessly to keep you informed but would also urge you to contact us if you have any concerns at all about the upcoming summer break as the school will be closed. We are happy to put in support for across the summer wherever we can and so please don't hesitate to contact us with any concerns you may have.

If there are any changes to the content of this letter based on changing Government guidance, I will of course contact you immediately.

### **In Summary**

- GCSE examinations results day is Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> August 2020
- All students, Years 7-11 will be returning to Axe Valley Academy in September
- Students should return in full school uniform (see attached guidance)
- Year 7 transition day will be on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> September 2020
- All other year groups, Years 8-11, will return on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> September 2020
- Further plans will be communicated as quickly as possible
- Please contact Reception 01297 32146 or email [admin@axevalley.devon.sch.uk](mailto:admin@axevalley.devon.sch.uk) with any concerns regarding the summer holidays or if you need any support put in place for the period of school closure over the summer.

Yours sincerely



Laura Jenkins  
Headteacher