



11 September 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

We are now at the end of our first full week back in school and I am extremely proud of the manner in which students have responded to the control measures we have in place. I can confirm that we have no reported cases at school. We need to be pragmatic and make adjustments when we think it will improve outcomes to keep everyone as safe as possible in a school environment. Please read this information carefully and discuss it with your child over the weekend.

Arrival/leaving school

As you know, we have allocated 4 entry/exit points for students. This is working well and facilitating social distancing within the year group bubbles. If you collect your child by car, please be respectful in your parking. **Do not** park on yellow lines or across the driveway of our neighbours please. Remind your child that they should not be congregating in groups of more than six on the way to and from school.

Break and lunch time

We have designated areas for each year group at break and lunch. We have a split lunch to facilitate space, but, unfortunately we are limited in the outdoor seating we have available for each year group bubble. As the season changes, we will move to indoor spaces for each year group.

Each year group bubble has access to a catering area serving hot and/or cold food. We are using the cashless catering system and students will be asked to sanitise their hands on entry to the catering areas and before eating to ensure healthy and safe hand hygiene. Due to government guidelines, our catering provider is not able to accept cash payments, so it is essential that all parents/carers set up a Wisepay account. Payment for food must be made via Wisepay, therefore it is important that parents/carers check the balance regularly. Please do not give your child cash which they will be unable to use in school. If you have any difficulties setting up your Wisepay account, please contact the Finance team: Finance@ridgeway.herts.sch.uk.

We are currently experiencing some issues with student Wisepay accounts. Please be assured we are working with our suppliers to resolve these issues and all students will continue to be offered food, whilst these issues are resolved.

Toilet breaks and refilling water bottles

All toilet facilities will be cleaned regularly throughout the day. Toilet breaks will be limited to break and lunch times unless for medical reasons. Staff will be monitoring the movement of students around the school during lesson time and changeovers and ask that toilet breaks are not taken during this time so we can maximise time in the classroom. Water fountains are to be used during break times to refill bottles. Where possible, water bottles should be large enough to last all day.

Face masks

Ridgeway Academy policy in relation to face masks for students is in line with the policy across the Alban Academies Trust and is guided by rapidly changing government and Director of Public Health for Hertfordshire guidance.

We believe that all students will possess a face mask as masks have been mandatory on public transport and in shops for some time. If your child does not have a face mask or you choose not to follow our guidance, your child will not face a sanction. Students have been asked to provide a hygienic bag to carry their mask. We will not be making arrangements for the disposal of masks in school as students may wish to wear their masks on the way home.

We appreciate scientific opinion in relation to the wearing of masks is divided. Headteachers are in the difficult position of deciding how to interpret government guidance. As such we offer guidance to students and parents, but you will be aware that the wearing of face masks cannot be enforced at present.

In my video message today, I have asked students to keep their mask in a sandwich bag in their blazer pocket with a small bottle of hand sanitizer which they should use before and after putting their mask on.

Arrangements for cleaning

Across the Alban Academies Trust all schools are adopting the same approach to cleaning; combining the school's cleaning contractors and student involvement.

At Ridgeway Academy the cleaning contractors clean every classroom during break or lunchtime and at the end of the school day. During the breaks it is not possible for all classrooms to be cleaned by staff as there is insufficient time for all classrooms to be visited. As we are keen for every class of students to be confident that their desks have been sanitised we are asking all classes to take collective responsibility for wiping the surfaces at the end of each lesson. In reality, this means your child will complete this task for one day each half term. We are in line with many schools across Hertfordshire in involving students in this collective effort to keep our environments safe.

Our cleaning contractor has provided additional resources throughout the day to ensure that toilets, corridors and common areas are cleaned regularly throughout the day in addition to the cleaning of all classrooms at one point during the day.

Symptoms, self-isolation, testing and tracing

Please follow the Government's advice regarding symptoms, self-isolation, testing and tracing. Information can be accessed via the NHS website:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

Please contact the school immediately if a member of your household tests positive.

In all suspected cases onsite, we will follow the guidance set out by Public Health England which includes the isolation of the student or staff member and a thorough cleaning regime. Should your child need to isolate we will contact you directly.

Home-based learning

All students and parents/carers have access to Show My Homework, this should be the primary source of setting home-based learning for students. It should contain the outline of the task and the deadline. Staff may wish to upload additional resources to google classroom for students to use to aid in their completion of home-based learning, this could include the lesson materials taught to the class. The use of this platform is due to the fact that parents do not currently have access to Google Classroom.

In the event of year groups needing to isolate away from school, the school timetable will be run using live lessons on Google Classroom and uploaded resources on this platform. We will support any families without access to devices to provide resources for their child.

Virtual parent information evenings

We intend to host our year group parent information evenings remotely this year and full details of how to log in to these live sessions shall be sent to you shortly. These meetings

contain important information regarding the year ahead and are hosted by your child's Director of Learning; I will also be present during the sessions. In the meantime, please save the date(s) of the meeting of your child's or children's year group from the list below:

Tuesday 22nd September	Year 8	5.00pm
Tuesday 22nd September	Year 9	6.30pm
Wednesday 23rd September	Year 7	5.00pm
Thursday 24th September	Year 10	5.00pm
Thursday 24th September	Year 11	6.30pm
Tuesday 29th September	Sixth Form	6.00pm

Reminder about PE kit

On the day they have a PE lesson, students should wear a Ridgeway branded polo shirt, shorts and socks. They may wear their Ridgeway tracksuit. If they do not have the branded item, tracksuit bottoms must be plain black. **Students are not allowed to not wear hoodies or other sportswear.** They may wear their blazer as an additional layer.

Directors of Learning / Year Group contact

Listed below are the contact details for the Director of Learning responsible for each year group, although your child's Form Tutor is your first point of call. Staff email address can be found on our website:

Year 7 – Mrs M Tinker (merideth.tinker@ridgeway.herts.sch.uk)

Year 8 – Mr K Koupis (kostas.koupis@ridgeway.herts.sch.uk)

Year 9 - Mr W Sarjeant (william.sarjeant@ridgeway.herts.sch.uk)

Year 10 / 11 – Mr G Merrigan (glenn.merrigan@ridgeway.herts.sch.uk)

Year 12 / 13 – Mrs S Merrigan (sarah.merrigan@ridgeway.herts.sch.uk)

Finally, I would like to thank all parents and carers for the ongoing support that we receive from you and for those of you who have taken the time to give us messages of support and valuable feedback. If you have concerns, please do get in touch via your child's Form Tutor or Director of Learning.

Yours sincerely



Sarah Mitcherson
Headteacher