

15 October 2020

Dear Parents and carers

We are now in our sixth week back at school I would like to thank you all for the support you have given to Fortis Academy during this challenging autumn term so far. Our summer grades showed a significant improvement on 2019 and our attendance so far is markedly higher than the city average. Fortis has had an excellent start.

As you know, to protect everyone's health, we have followed DfE and Public Health advice and at times over the last few weeks have asked groups of students and staff to self-isolate for a period of time to ensure that Fortis continues to remain open for as many students as possible. Today, in response to the emerging local picture around Covid infection rates and through further consultation with Public Health England, we have taken the decision not to open the school for students and staff next week and for all students to continue learning from home. In addition to the half-term holiday the week after, this offers our school the opportunity to create a 14 day 'circuit break' to then emerge afresh and plan to open through next half term. Whilst this will be an inconvenience to us all, I believe this decision will provide longer-term benefits. I trust you will understand and support this decision.

We will return to school on Monday 2nd November 2020 but it is important that you keep your child at home if they have any symptoms of Covid-19, if they are self-isolating due to other members of the household having symptoms, or if they are being tested, or if your child is awaiting the result of a Covid-19 test themselves. A reminder of the symptoms are provided at the end of this letter.

Staff will deliver lessons next week to years 10, 11, 12 and 13 through Microsoft TEAMS, learning activities will also be provided on TEAMS for all other year groups. For years 7, 8 and 9 students will be invited to 'live lessons' on TEAMS and should be prepared to access their TEAMS accounts at their normal lesson times on their school timetable. Further to this, students in years 7 – 10 will be provided with hard copies of work to complete during the week. Students in years 7 and 8 will return home with this work tomorrow. Your support in encouraging your child to engage with the work set and online lessons would be much appreciated. If you need any assistance, please refer to our TEAMS guidance on our website. If access to Wifi or technology is a continuing problem for you that the school is unaware of, please contact the school so we can support. The school remains open to students living with key workers and to those who are vulnerable.

In order to support your child with online learning, we need you to complete the consent form as a matter of importance, via this link

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=48aZkktFFECRk1vXiMa8-g7k62ouQ1VLhC0o1XIrYo1UNzBXM1BIME1LMkJXM0NIOU1JTzI3Uk9aNC4u>

Use this link to access online learning <http://www.myfa.org.uk/>

On a more positive note, I continue to be impressed with the way students have dressed for school and the growing number of students wearing their new Fortis badges and ties with pride. By the time we return it would be fantastic to see everyone in full Fortis uniform to build on our achievements so far. I have also been impressed with the co-operation shown with the wearing of masks by students. We have however, had to provide some students from our own supply so please take the time to explain to your son/daughter the importance of bringing and looking after their own.

One of our key priorities is to become a truly inclusive school where all needs, cultures and backgrounds are validated and celebrated. October, as you know, is Black History Month, which has been a focus during Edge time and assemblies and a big spotlight in our Sixth Form. Please look out for more activities next week which will be communicated through the Student Year Group Bulletin (which can be found on the website, links will also be sent to students) and Edge materials on TEAMS.

Finally, hot off the press is the news that well over 200,000 achievement points have been awarded to students since the launch of our *Go4Schools* platform in mid-September. This will support our drive to reward students for academic excellence and displaying Fortis values in their behaviour choices. Once embedded into school life, we very much look forward to providing you and your children with the *Go4Schools* App, which will enable you to share in their rewards and success. For this, we will most definitely need a reliable email address from you, which we will contact you about soon. My heartfelt thanks go out to staff for embracing this ethos and recognising all the positive things our students do every day. And for all their hard work and commitment to our new school.

I hope you are able to enjoy the 'extended' half-term break, look out also for safety guidance next week in regard to Bonfire Night, and I look forward to seeing everyone again on 2nd November.

Yours faithfully

A Otero

Alberto Otero
Campus Principal

Covid-19 – Reminder

The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are:

- new continuous cough and/or
- high temperature and/or
- a loss of, or change in, normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

If your child develops any of these symptoms of COVID-19, they should remain at home and arrangements should be made for them to be tested. Please also inform us of this. At that time all other household members must also stay at home, not go to work, school or public areas, even for exercise.