



**HERMITAGE  
ACADEMY**

**Hermitage Academy**

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Dear Parent/Carer,

As you will be aware, the school is operating within the Department for Education's guidelines for the opening of schools. All of our actions are aimed at reducing risk and we have refined these constantly since our return in September.

As you will know, we now have 3 very long lessons in order to reduce movement around the school. From next week, we will make a significant change so that the shortest lesson is the last one in the day. A number of students struggle with very long lessons by the end of the afternoon.

Lesson 1 & 2 will be combined, as will Lesson 3&4 and then lesson 5 will be one hour. This also will enable us to have three breaktimes and three lunchtimes. These will split up the very long lessons for the younger pupils. As soon as this pandemic is over, it is our aim to move to one break and one longer lunchtime!

A benefit of this change, is that each year group will have access to one dining area for their whole lunchtime and breaktime, and if it rains, the students can be indoors and not mix with other year group bubbles. As you will be aware, our capacity in the dining areas has been halved by Covid measures, as pupils must not face each other at tables.

Year 10, Year 11 and the Sixth Form are each a 'bubble'. This is necessary for option subjects to take place.

Year 7, 8 and 9 are also, each a 'bubble' and we are doing everything possible to split each one into 2 half bubbles. This is extremely difficult given the physical layout of spaces inside the school and in particular, dining facilities and toilet facilities (new toilets have been opened this week). This change will help us to maintain the half bubbles. In year 8 and 9, pupils will have access to the dining halls according to their English classes so that each half of the year can remain separated.

Please be assured that we are doing everything we can to provide our pupils with excellent learning experiences and at the same time, reduce risks where-ever possible. The systems we are running are very complicated and we would really value your help in encouraging your children not to mix with other bubbles, other than their own siblings, on the way to school or in school. This is quite the opposite to what we actually want to achieve, where students of all ages learn together. This is a great sadness, but one that we hope we will soon resolve, when we all come through the other side of this pandemic.

Yours sincerely

**Janice Gorchal**  
**Deputy Chief Executive Officer**