



# Wigston Academy and Wigston College



Issue 1 - September 2020

## Welcome...

Dear Parents, Carers and Students,

Welcome to this the second draft of this year's first bulletin. The first draft was sitting on my desk ready to send out as we received the information that one of our Year 12 students had tested positive for Covid 19. We continue to wish them well on behalf of the whole Wigston Academies Trust community. Starting back to school is always a challenge and anxious time for young people, but this is especially true against the backdrop of a pandemic. Teachers and schools provide support for young people giving them certainty by providing clear rules, guidance and help. However in the current climate of conflicting news, social media and the opinions of everyone from everywhere, this can cause further confusion for our young people.

I have been incredibly impressed with the attitude and approach of our students to returning to our schools. They have been polite, respectful and engaged fully with the new rules and structures around hygiene, staggered times, curriculum changes and limited movement.

All of our students have undergone a 'reboot' to school life in which they have been introduced or reintroduced to our Trust values, ways of working and ensuring they know where to find support for their wellbeing and learning. I would like to take this opportunity to welcome our new Year 7s and the record breaking number of Year 12s. We continue to reassure all of our students and you that we are following all guidance and regularly review our risk assessment and protective measures. Please see the latest updates included in this bulletin. We have clear plans in place for our catch-up programme and in the event of an increase in infection in the community our tier 2 is ready to be put into action. This will see us being told by the relevant authorities to put a rota system in place for students. We hope that this will not be the case and that Wigston continues to stay out of lockdown. However as we know, when it comes to the safety of our students it is essential that we take all practical measures.

Thank you to all parents and carers who have been so supportive and for your kind words. It is times like this that it is essential that we all pull together for the benefit of our local community and to reassure and support our young people. As always if you have a concern, query or question please get in touch.

**Mike Wilson**

**Headteacher**

**Wigston Academy**

**Wigston College**

### **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:**

School Closes—Friday 16th October 2020  
Mid Term Break - Monday 19th October to  
Friday 23rd October 2020  
School Opens—Monday 26th October 2020  
School Closes—Friday 18th December 2020  
School Opens—Tuesday 5th January 2021

We are pleased to announce our open evening and morning for parents and carers of current year 6 students who wish to join us in August 2021. The dates are:

**Wednesday 23rd September 5pm - 7pm and  
Saturday 26th September 10am - 12pm.**  
Booking information will follow shortly.

## ASSESSMENT

We have been clear that our aim was to ensure students returned and settled back into school without undue pressure. We do however need to check to see what our students know so that our teachers can plan effectively. Therefore from the week beginning 14th September teachers will begin to undertake class based assessment. We are calling these progress tests; what this means is the results will not be used to provide grades or marks in any form. The assessments are to solely identify gaps in individuals learning so that teachers can effectively plan the learning of their Year 13 students who will be applying for university. We will work closely with them and their parents and carers to ensure that courses they select are the best for them and that we provide the information that is needed for them.

## TEACHING & LEARNING

### Retrieval Practice

“Retrieval practice is a learning strategy where we focus on getting information out. Through the act of retrieval, or calling information to mind, our memory for that information is strengthened and forgetting is less likely to occur. Retrieval practice is a powerful tool for improving learning.”

(Kate Jones Lovetoteach87.com)



#### Retrieval Practice is:

- Retrieving something from memory (often with the help of a cue).
- Effort to retrieve information strengthens memory (desirable difficulty).

#### Retrieval Practice is not:

- Re-studying notes/revision guides.
- Asking students to retrieve something they have not already been taught!

### What activities can help students to develop their retrieval skills?

- Flash cards
- Mind-mapping from memory
- Completing practice questions without notes

#### Elaboration:

#### Elaboration is:

- Deepening understanding through questioning.
- Interrogating answers.
- Making connections between ideas.

#### Elaboration is not:

- Writing more.
- Students teaching themselves new knowledge.

#### How can a student do this?

- Creating a concept map.
- Asking “why is that answer right?” during a recall quiz.



## Knowledge Organisers:

Key Stage 3 students will have Knowledge organisers as they study different elements of the emergency timetable.

Key Stage 4 and 5 students have Knowledge Organisers (KOs), these are effectively the 'non negotiables' of key knowledge for each subject the student studies. The KOs break down the key elements of topics studied so students can practise and revisit the chunks of knowledge. The more it is practised, the more likely it is that the knowledge transfers to their long-term memory. Over time, this is the foundation of their learning and allows them to develop a better understanding across each subject area.

## Using Knowledge Organisers at home:

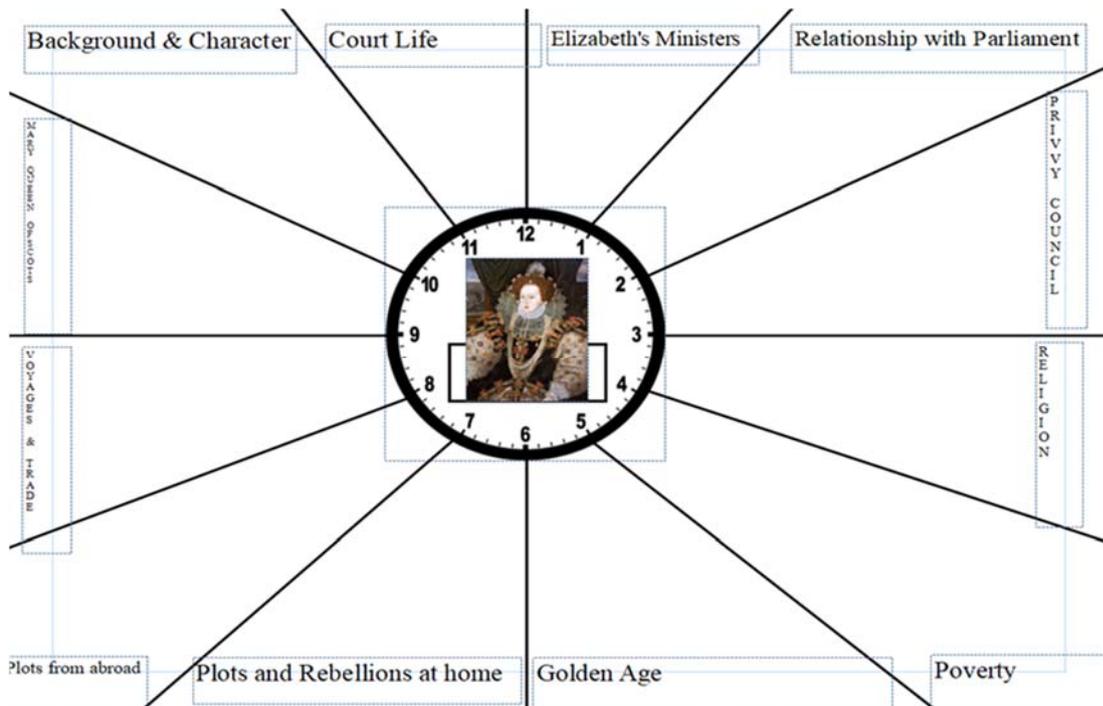
Key Stage 3	Key Stage 4	Key Stage 5
<p>15 minutes per school night, per subject – choose a subject, making sure you have covered all of your subjects each week (you could do 2 subjects per night = 30 minutes)</p> <p>Quiz yourself – read through the information, repeating it back to yourself. Cover the information and have a go at writing it as it or creating a mind map. Check it against the KO – how accurate were you? Which aspects do you need to go over again?</p> <p>Create flashcards – once you have completed a section, test yourself by turning the information into revision flashcards.</p> <p>Application – once you have learned the information on the KO, complete tasks set by teachers as homework or try answering exam questions linked to the content you have learned. Your knowledge can be applied to other tasks/classwork/homework and develop longer writing tasks by adding more specialist knowledge to the answers.</p> <p>Revise – towards the end of topics / half terms / terms, mix up your flash cards. Teachers will be testing you regularly on the content of KO on both current and previous topics – keep a separate pile of ones you get wrong when testing yourself or getting parents and carers to test you. Then focus on those more before the test.</p>	<p>30 minutes per school night, per subject – choose a subject, making sure you have covered all of your exam subjects each week</p> <p>Quiz yourself – read the information, repeating it back to yourself. Cover the information and have a go at writing it as it or creating a mind map. Check it against the KO – how accurate were you? Which aspects do you need to go over again?</p> <p>Create flashcards – Once you have completed a section, test yourself by turning the information into revision flashcards.</p> <p>Application – once you have learned the information on the KO, complete tasks set by teachers as homework or try answering exam questions linked to the content you have learned. Your knowledge can be applied to other tasks/classwork/homework and develop longer writing tasks by adding more specialist knowledge to the answers.</p> <p>Revise – Towards the end of topics / half terms / terms, mix up your flash cards. Teachers will be testing you regularly on the content of KO on both current and previous topics – keep a separate pile of ones you get wrong when testing yourself or getting parents and carers to test you. Then focus on those more before the test.</p>	<p>60 minutes per subject over the course of a week– choose a subject, making sure you have covered all of your subjects each week</p> <p>Quiz yourself – read the information, repeating it back to yourself. Cover the information and have a go at writing it as it or creating a mind map. Check it against the KO – how accurate were you? Which aspects do you need to go over again?</p> <p>Create flashcards – Once you have completed a section, test yourself by turning the information into revision flashcards.</p> <p>Application – once you have learned the information on the KO, complete tasks set by teachers as homework or try answering exam questions linked to the content you have learned. Your knowledge can be applied to other tasks/classwork/homework and develop longer writing tasks by adding more specialist knowledge to the answers.</p> <p>Revise and perfect your knowledge – Towards the end of topics / half terms / terms, mix up your flash cards. Teachers will be testing you regularly on the content of KO on both current and previous topics – keep a separate pile of ones you get wrong when testing yourself and review those regularly. Then focus on those more before the test. Get someone at home to test you out too!</p>



## Examples of Retrieval Activities:

### Revision Clock:

This can be used in any subject and a time per section can be identified, for example students could be given two minutes per section to see what they can remember and jot it down in sections. Below is an example for history and Queen Elizabeth. It works just as well for English Literature looking at themes or characters in studies texts.

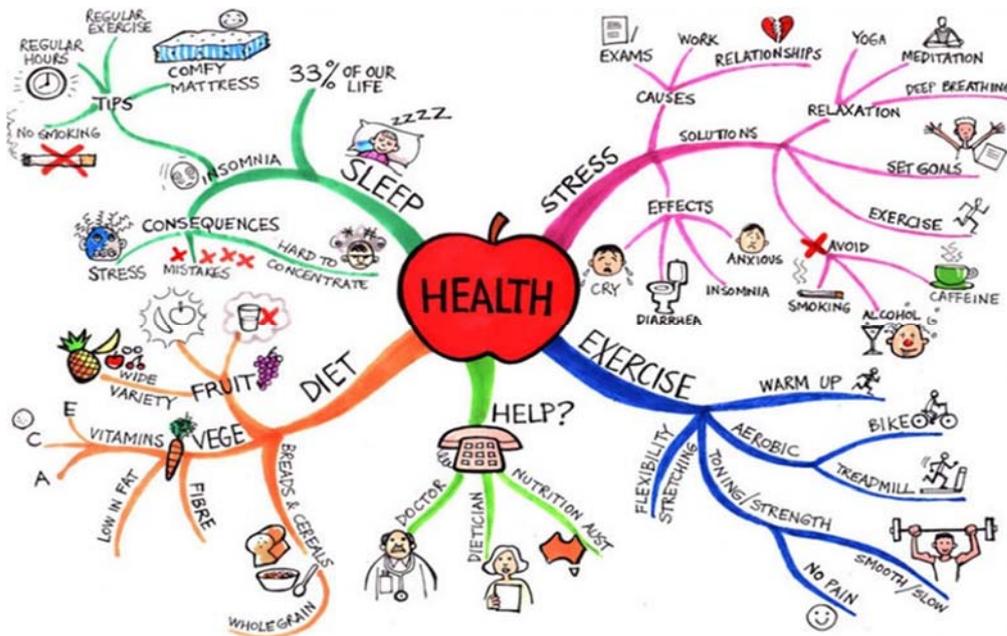


### Other ideas for retrieval practice at home:

- **Low stakes quizzing** – multiple-choice questions. There are lots of these on SENECA learning and the Get Revising website that can be used for most subjects.
- **Brain dump** – pick a topic (this works in any subject). A brain dump is simply the act of dumping all the contents of the mind for a specified topic onto paper. Parents – you can help by checking to see if they have remembered the key information. If not, highlight the areas the student needs to revisit.
- **Revision Guides/Textbooks:** Not just reading them but using them to self-quiz and test. Make good use of the questions and answers in the books, cover and write and repeat etc. Parents can be quizmasters too!
- **Ask the expert:** a parent or sibling can ask you to explain a certain topic or Shakespeare character for example and the student then has to be the expert and share what they know.
- **Mind maps:** Students not only create mind maps from key facts but also self-test from the information. It is important students use the idea of dual coding on mind maps and do not overfill with too much text and highlighting text.

## How to Make a Mind Map

- Think of the general main theme and write that down in the center of the page. i.e. Food
- Figure out sub-themes of your main concept and draw branches to them from the center, beginning to look like a spider web i.e. Meats, Dairy, Breads
- Make sure to use very short phrases or even single words
- Add images to invoke thought or get the message across better
- Try to think of at least two main points for each sub-theme you created and create branches out to those



**Remember: 'The more we practice, the more we know and recall!'**

## YEAR 11

Myself and the Year 11 team are extremely pleased and proud of the way the students have come back to school. As you can imagine, there are lots of changes during these unprecedented times but together with our 'Re-boot' programme and dedicated staff we have implemented them very well. I feel being based over at the college in C block gives the students a fantastic opportunity to get on with their GCSE's without any distractions. It was so lovely to see the students and hear them laughing and joking with excitement, they really do make our school. I'm looking forward to a successful year and working together with you all to achieve this.

Mr Carletti – Head of Year 11

## YEAR 10

It has been lovely to welcome the Year 10 students back into school. School buildings are a very different place when they are empty and our students bring this building to life. As you will know, I am new to this year group and it has been an absolute pleasure to spend the last couple of weeks getting to know them. It has been really nice to see them re-engaging with their friends and peers after such a long time.

Year 10 have shown themselves to be a very mature, friendly and well-mannered year group who I am really looking forward to working with over the next two years as they work towards their GCSEs.

I wish them all the best as we settle back into school life.

Mrs Moss – Head of Year 10

## YEAR 9

What a fantastic start back we've had, under the current circumstances.

I cannot get over how much they have all grown whilst I've been away from school, some are almost unrecognisable!

It's been so lovely catching up with all of them and some of the parents too. They have adapted very well to the new school day and whenever I have been free to wander around, I have been impressed with what I have seen happening in the classrooms as the students seem to be engaging well. I'm very much looking forward to this school year and working with yourselves and your children again.

Mrs Chapman—Head of Year 9

## YEAR 8

Welcome back Year 8! It is so nice to see you all back in school. The past six months may not have been the easiest but I hope you've all had time to refresh yourselves and are raring to go this academic year! Whether you felt excited about returning to school or slightly apprehensive, I'm really proud of how quickly and sensibly you have settled into Year 8. I look forward to working with you all this term, I know you will all do your best!

Comments from some of our Year 8 students:

Gabriel—"It's fun being back at school again. Good measures have been put in place and I'm enjoying being back".

Darcey—"It's nice to be back. I like being back in school. It's also nice being in the same class all day".

Jess—"I feel really safe and it's nice to be back with my friends. It's nice to see my teachers with their smiley faces".

Charlie—"I feel safe, it's fun. The classes are good and it's nice to see my friends and the teachers too".

Ella—"I think it's good how many hand sanitisers are around school. It's nice to be in the same class".

Davansh—"The school feels safe and I'm glad to be back with my friends".

Mrs Bramley—Head of Year 8

## YEAR 7

It was with great joy that the Academy finally welcomed through the doors our Class of 2020 Year 7 students. Our cohort this year came from 24 different feeder Primary Schools.

The first 3 days (Friday, Tuesday and Wednesday) were our postponed Induction Days. They all took part in sessions that taught students about our school values and expectations; we feel the induction process has prepared them well for the year ahead. As their Head of Year I was immensely proud of them all. They came looking smart with smiles on their faces, equipped and ready for learning. They all worked incredibly hard throughout.

We are now onto timetabled lessons and still I continue to be blown away by their achievements and enthusiasm. They are a wonderful group of young people; they have shown kindness towards one another; have shown a willingness to work alongside and make new friends with others from other primary schools without any fuss and their behaviour during and outside of lessons has been impeccable.

As their Head of Year I couldn't be happier with how these first few days have gone. Their resilience in the bizarre times we find ourselves in is amazing. The year group has settled well into The Wigston Way. I am very much looking forward to the year ahead and getting to know them better and celebrating their continued achievements.

Mrs Smith—Head of Year 7

## YEAR 7 HOME LEARNING

Satchel One is the online platform Wigston Academies Trust uses to set students homework. When set work students need to check it off to show it is complete. They may also be asked to upload work to Satchel One. Don't worry there are help guides on Satchel to help with this!

As a parent or carer it is really useful, once you have registered, you will see when work is set, you can check it has been completed and you are also notified if work has not been submitted.

Year 7 students should have arrived home this week with a letter with user names and passwords to enable your son or daughter to log on as well as you as the parent or carer. You can download the app for free in App Store, you can also register via Microsoft and Google on laptops or PCs.



## POST 16 TEAM NEWS

We have welcomed Mrs Claricoates and Mrs Espiner to the Post 16 Team to look specifically at student welfare and well-being. This is to ensure that we have the capacity to further develop and improve the experience all of our students have and we very much look forward to the term ahead. We have already begun to work with our Year 13 students to support their next steps for Post 18 Pathways in terms of UCAS, apprenticeship or employment applications and this will continue throughout this term. We also thank you as parents for your support as we know this has been a difficult time for many and the return to college may have been a challenge for many of our students. It is worth mentioning that we have waved farewell to our outgoing Year 13s. Their final months with us were not as anyone would have planned or wished for however they have secured some outstanding results. They will be going on to take up their places at many of the country's top universities or with high quality apprenticeship providers or employers; we wish them all well.

## PERFORMING ARTS

Performing Arts are looking forward to this year. Things will be slightly different; however, we are determined to bring to you the performances that we are known for at Wigston Academies Trust. This may be in a different format than in previous years and we will be putting performances together as soon as we are able to.

Please encourage your children to get involved in what is a large selection of extra-curricular activities when they resume.

Thank you for your support and we look forward to seeing you in the not too distant future.

## CORONAVIRUS UPDATES:

We continue to follow all government, NHS and Public Health England guidance and our risk assessment and protective measures continue to be updated. At the time of publishing these are the latest updates. As you are aware guidance can change rapidly and we will continue to keep you informed.

**Anyone who displays symptoms of coronavirus, or who has tested positive in the last 10 days, must not enter the school grounds.**

Please do not send your child to school or onto the school premises if they show symptoms of coronavirus.

You can use the NHS 111 online questionnaire to help assess their child's illness.

Any student who displays any symptoms is immediately sent home.

We will inform you if your child is unwell as soon as possible.

**Visitors to the schools (including parents) will be allowed by pre-arranged appointment.**

If urgent you can call into the reception at the Academy or College, however we ask you to follow the social distancing guidance on display and ideally wear a face covering.

**Parents need to engage with the NHS track and trace programme. This means that they need to be ready and willing to:**

- Book a test if they (or their child) display symptoms.
- Provide details of anyone they (or their child) have been in close contact with if they were to test positive for coronavirus or are asked by NHS Test and Trace.
- Self-isolate if they have been in close contact with someone who develops coronavirus symptoms or someone who tests positive.

Parents need to inform the school immediately of test results.

If an individual tests negative, they feel well and no longer have coronavirus symptoms, they, and the members of their household, can stop self-isolating.

**Face coverings (A face covering is a covering of any type which covers your nose and mouth. It is not the same as the surgical masks or respirators used by healthcare and other workers as part of personal protective equipment (PPE)).**

We continue to follow the government guidance that face coverings should not be worn in lessons. We have significantly reduced the movement of students and introduced a wide range of protective measures to mitigate risk and we are not in a local lockdown. Also we are following government guidance as we are encouraging students to wear face coverings in communal areas or during lesson change overs to wear a face covering. Here are the quotes from the government guidance:

*'The government is not recommending universal use of face coverings in all schools.'*

*'Based on current evidence and the measures that schools are already putting in place, such as the system of controls and consistent bubbles, face coverings will not be necessary in the classroom even where social distancing is not possible. Face coverings would have a negative impact on teaching and their use in the classroom should be avoided.'*

/continued

The government have also produced the following guidance for the safe wearing of face coverings, we ask that you discuss this with your child so that they are aware.

- The safe wearing of face coverings requires hands to be cleaned before and after touching, including to remove or put them on and the safe storage of them in individual, sealable plastic bags between use. Where a face covering becomes damp, it should not be worn and the face covering should be replaced carefully.
- Students must not touch the front of their face covering during use or when removing it and they must dispose of temporary face coverings in a 'black bag' waste bin (not recycling bin) or place reusable face coverings in a plastic bag which they can take home with them to wash, and then wash/sanitise their hands again.

*All information contained here was accurate at the time of publication*

