

Little Heath School

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Information for University and College Admission Teams 2022/2023

Little Heath School is a mixed comprehensive school that is situated on the West edge of Reading. The school has over 1600 students of whom there are over 340 sixth form students. The pupil intake is mixed with students coming from both West Berkshire Local Educational Authority and Reading Local Education Authority. We have a truly diverse sixth form with forty percent of our intake coming from ethnic minorities.

The school closed for all students on Friday 20th March 2020 and students received some extracurricular work/activities to complete during this period of time. As a school, students had access to work that was uploaded to www.showmyhomework.co.uk which became their learning platform during the first lockdown. This meant that the students did not receive a taught education when they were in year 10. During this period of time, there was no live remote learning for students as the school did not have a suitable package in place for it to become a policy, which relied on students having to learn independently to complete the activities that were set over this period.

In September 2020 the students started their final GCSE year under strict school rules including the use of year group bubbles. This meant the practical subjects and the practical parts of the course could not be taught in the specialist rooms needed for these GCSE's. Students also had restricted access to computers during this time which prevented them from working on coursework and doing independent research. These bubble arrangements lasted for the whole academic year.

In January 2021 the school closed as part of the government requirements to fight the pandemic. This meant all students missed eight weeks of face-to-face teaching and had to rely on a bespoke remote timetable where students generally received one hour less teaching per week compared with their face-to-face timetable. The remote learning took place via MS Teams and it took a while for staff and students to understand the functionality of this software to enhance the teaching that was taking place. The students' attendance was monitored via their teachers. Some students failed to access the lessons/resources due to a lack of IT equipment at home or a suitable internet connection. Therefore, these students are further behind than others. This was corrected in February 2021 when the school received laptops and internet dongles for these students but in certain cases these laptops had to be shared between the rest of the family, preventing the student from attending every online lesson.

Over the period of this academic year, 60.2% of the year group had to isolate at one point in time outside of the time the school was closed. Several students had to isolate more than once so they could not access the face-to-face teaching and had to catch up using the resources provided.

Students were not able to attend a full set of induction days which meant many of the students started their sixth form courses not as robustly as students had previously. In

year 12 the students have had full face to face teaching but this was once again interrupted due to staff being ill and having to isolate. The Mathematics department in particular suffered with a number of teachers having long term sickness that left many of the students working independently for a number of weeks. The students were able to take pre public examinations in June of Year 12, enabling teachers to check on their progress and, where necessary, set catch up work over the summer holidays. The students were also able to attend a live 'Futures Day' in July where they could receive information about how to apply to university and to start their applications at this point.

Over this period, the school has done its best to ensure all students received the very best education within the facilities the school has in place. Several students coped well, the majority completed as much work as they could and only a few were unable to complete any work at all.