



4 December 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Thank you for your ongoing support and overwhelming positivity with the school's management of the pandemic.

We understand that as parents and carers, your children and their education is paramount and these are concerning times. We would like to reassure you that we only ask staff to leave work on Show My Homework if a bubble is isolating at home and there are too many staff absent through Covid to be able to deliver the lessons online. Earlier this week we had 25 staff absent. This is our highest rate so far, meaning the delivery of online lessons was not possible. However, all staff who are self-isolating and not ill are instructed to deliver lessons live online via Microsoft Teams. Guidance for how students access Microsoft Teams can be found on the homepage of the school's website.

We have also discovered patterns in infections when students have been out of school working from home. 4 Year 9s tested positive when they had not been in school for over a week. Please please make sure your children stay within your family/social bubble, as we have some students and staff who have clinically extremely vulnerable family members and this is a real worry to them when Covid is being brought in from outside school.

Similarly, this week alone we have had **9 children sent into School with symptoms of COVID-19 by parents / carers**. These children have been sent home to be tested and **some have since tested positive**. Following positive results we then contact all close contacts of the children and advise them to isolate for 14 days from last contact. **Please ensure that if your child has any COVID symptoms, they do not come into School. If any member of the household is being tested the children must stay home to isolate while waiting for the test results.**

If a positive case is reported in school, the seating plans for each subject will be used plus the list of close contacts given by the individual who tested positive. The close contacts named will be spoken to verify they are a close contact.

Every week we re-address the school's plans and risk assessments. We have made a decision that, in order to support students' mental health and opportunities to do more practical work, from January, students will again move around the building in their original groups in both Key Stage 3 and 4. A one way system has been developed and all students will be bought a visor from school's budget. We request that all parents and carers speak to their children about keeping their visor on at all times whilst they are in the building. Hopefully, this strategy will prevent the issues that broken paper masks have caused. We have also been advised this week that **cotton masks are not advisable anymore** and that masks must be NHS quality waterproof masks, changed every 3-4 hours (as originally recommended).

*"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full"*

Justice, Tolerance, Forgiveness and Generosity

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We apologise if the landscape keeps changing. This is beyond our control, but we felt that buying the students visors would alleviate any concerns parents may have about students not wearing masks/breaking masks/losing masks and take away some of the stresses regarding daily checks and carrying spares.

In the past week we have had a large surge in the number of positive cases amongst students, including those awaiting test results. **27 students have tested positive this week alone** and consequently, in order to avoid a potentially longer school closure, we will be carrying out a deep clean of the whole school over the weekend and on Monday. Deep cleaning a site as large as ours is quite an undertaking, however, this sudden rise has made it necessary and we are not the first school by far in the Local Authority to undertake this measure, In fact, we have been fortunate to escape this so far. However, it is now necessary and therefore, **School will remain closed on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> December. Students should remain at home on this day**, returning to School if they have not been instructed by track and trace or School to stay at home on Tuesday December 8<sup>th</sup>. **If you have received a letter from school please stick to the date on the letter you have been told to return to school.**

Lessons on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> December will be delivered online by staff wherever technically possible and students should log on and follow their normal timetable times. Back up work will be on Show my homework wherever a technical fault does occur.

The year 11 mock exam catchups will be rescheduled as follows:

DAY	SESSION	SUBJECT
Tuesday	am	English1
	pm	Maths 1
Wednesday	am	Maths 2
	pm	English 2
Thursday	am	Maths 3
	pm	Science

**We would like to reassure you that, walking around the building the huge majority of lessons are continuing as they always did, with high expectations.** We understand there have been some worries regarding supply teachers and we recognise this fact. It is unavoidable in the current climate. However, all school improvement work is continuing, with specialist leaders of education (SLEs) working with many of our departments. **External scrutiny of our curriculum has taken place in 3 subject areas by an ex-Senior HMI (Her Majesty's Inspectorate) and we are extremely pleased with the feedback.** We are still ploughing on and we will do the very best we can for your children. We are still on course to achieve our vision.

Sadly, we do now have one member of staff in hospital suffering from Covid-19 and we would ask that you keep them in your prayers.

Yours sincerely,



Lisa Corrigan  
Headteacher