

## **Covid Handbook for Parents and Students (November 2021)**

### **Context**

In response to rising Covid cases rates in multiple year groups, we decided to introduce heightened control measures for the period covering Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> October to Friday 19<sup>th</sup> November. We chose these dates for two reasons:

- It covered the half-term period which we felt might slow infection rates down.
- November 19<sup>th</sup> would be two weeks after our Y7-Y11 students had been vaccinated.

Since half term, we have seen a significant reduction in case rates. This reduction has also been sustained in recent weeks, presumably because of the vaccination programme. The Local Authority is reporting similar trends in our region.

In light of the above, we feel that it would be appropriate for us to relax our current approach and return to the measures that we had in place in September. While this is not quite a 'return to normal', it is considerably less restrictive than the recently introduced arrangements.

We will continue to monitor case rates in the weeks and months ahead and will tighten or loosen restrictions as necessary.

Changes to the October version of this guidance are highlighted in red.

### **Dress Code**

Normal dress code and uniform expectations will apply as normal.

### **Equipment**

Equipment can still be shared between groups but we will try to reduce this when it is easy to do so. Exercise books can still be collected and returned in the normal fashion.

### **Face Coverings**

These are no longer required for staff or students. However, students will be asked to have a face covering on their person at all times, in case we change our approach to this issue at any point. Students travelling on buses will need to wear a face covering.

### **Hand Sanitiser and Wipes**

Parents are asked to provide hand sanitiser and wipes for their son/daughter. Students will have the opportunity to clean their workspace before the start of each lesson.

## **Social Distancing**

This will not be required anywhere on site, for staff or students.

## **LFD Testing**

Where case rates are high, we will LFD test the relevant year group/s in school.

Parents are urged to maintain twice weekly LFD testing at home.

## **Cleaning Routines**

We will maintain enhanced cleaning routines around the school site.

Cleaning equipment will be available in every classroom.

## **Ventilation**

We will keep windows and doors open as much as possible during the day, although the fire doors in the corridors will need to remain shut.

## **Dining Hall and Holding Areas**

The dining hall will come back into full use.

Holding areas will not be in use, although we may need to reintroduce this sort of year group separation if circumstances change.

## **Teaching Rooms**

All students can follow their timetabled rooming in the normal fashion.

## **School Day Timings**

School days timings will remain unchanged.

## **Extracurricular Clubs**

Extracurricular clubs for specific year groups can return to normal, including those that involve mixed age groups.

Sports fixtures or other events that include other schools can be scheduled to take place after November 19<sup>th</sup>.

## **Movement Around School**

We will keep the internal one-way system in place in all areas of the school, except the Performing Arts Block and the Sixth Form Centre.

We will return to normal start-of-lesson routines. As such, students will be asked to line up outside the classroom until their teacher arrives. In some specific cases, in order to limit corridor congestion, we may allow students to enter the classroom while they are waiting for their teacher. These arrangements will be communicated by individual teachers to their teaching groups as necessary. This means that students should assume that they need to line up outside their classroom unless they are specifically told otherwise by their teacher.

## **Behaviour**

Normal behaviour expectations will apply in full.

## **Health Monitoring (Students)**

Parents are reminded not to send their child to school if they are displaying Covid-19 symptoms (persistent cough; high temperature; loss of sense of smell/taste).

If a child begins to feel ill with Covid symptoms during the school day, they will be sent to the Pastoral Centre. We have procedures in place to manage students with Covid-19 symptoms separately from other students. Parents will be contacted if their son/daughter is showing Covid-19 symptoms and asked to take them home as soon as possible.

Students who are close contacts with a positive case in the same household will need to:

- Stay at home for at least five days
- Limit social contact
- Take a PCR test and receive the result before returning to school
- Take LFD tests every day from Day 6-10

When counting days, Day 1 is the day after the person in the household started showing symptoms. If the person in the household has not shown symptoms, then Day 1 becomes the day after their positive test result.

## **Fire Alarm**

In the event of a fire alarm, we will organise our evacuation procedures in the normal fashion.

## **Toilets (Students)**

Students will be allowed to use the toilets in the normal fashion. We will not replace the corridor doors to the toilets so that these areas can be easily monitored by staff.

Students will be discouraged from taking a toilet break during a lesson (unless they have a toilet pass).

## **Assemblies**

These will still take place for the Sixth Form.

For the time being, we feel that we should continue to avoid bringing the entire year group together for routine assemblies. This is not a total ban on assemblies though. Learning Managers may choose to schedule an assembly with their year group if they feel that a particularly important issue needs to be addressed.

## **Visitors**

Individual adult visitors can come into school, provided they confirm a negative LFD test result in advance. Large groups of adult visitors are more problematic and such events will need to be agreed in advance with senior staff.

## **Open Evenings / Large Events**

Currently planned events (such as Chicago, GCSE Certificate Evening, etc.) will go ahead. Additional control measures have already been decided upon for these events. These measures will be reviewed and finalised the week before the event, with cancellation at late notice remaining an option.

The next major whole-school event is the Sixth Form Open Evening (January). If case rates continue to remain low, we will go ahead with this event in person. However, we will also develop a 'Plan B' so that we can change our approach at short notice if necessary.

## **Online Lessons**

We will continue to provide online learning for students who are isolating. Students can log on to these lessons by going to [meet.google.com](https://meet.google.com) and entering their teacher's staff code.

We will continue to update our central spreadsheet on a daily basis so that our teachers can set up online access for those students who are isolating. However, please bear in mind that if your case is reported to us late in the evening or at the weekend, it may take us a few hours the next morning to update our records and systems accordingly.

## **Lesson Delivery**

Students do not need to wear face coverings routinely in lessons.

We will try to return to normal lesson activities and routines as much as possible. In some circumstances, (e.g. when the level of student circulation is likely to be high), teachers may ask their students to wear a face covering.

Teaching assistants will continue to work with their SEND students on a 1:1 basis in the normal fashion.

### **Assessment, Marking and The Presentation of Student Work**

Staff will be able to collect and mark exercise books in the normal fashion.

### **Communicating With Parents**

Parents will be able to come into school for an appointment, provided they confirm that they have had a negative LFD test.

We will move all parents' evenings online.

### **Summary**

We will continue to monitor these issues very closely in the months ahead and will respond to any emerging trends as advised by Public Health.