

20/11/20

Dear Parents/Carers

I write to update you at the end of the most challenging week that any of us can remember. From 12 November we have been severely impacted by the effects of COVID-19. Staffing levels due to isolation periods, sickness, shielding notices and absence remain extremely challenging throughout next week. However, we feel that, so long as we do not have another series of notifications of infection, we will be in a position to resume face to face teaching on Thursday 26 November apart from those pupils who are still required to isolate. We are in constant contact with the LA health protection team, governors, the diocese and the medics and we are monitoring absence levels regularly and repeatedly throughout each day.

We will, as things stand, be able to open to:

Year 7 on Thursday 26 November 2020

Year 8 on Thursday 26 November 2020

Year 9 on Thursday 26 November 2020

Year 10 on Friday 27 November 2020

Year 11 will continue to attend school as they have this week as per their schedule of exams

Obviously, those pupils who have been instructed by NHS England to self-isolate during the last week because they have developed symptoms, have received clinically extremely vulnerable letters or tested positive will have to follow their individual instructions as communicated to them directly.

Pupils in Year 8 were originally scheduled to have their HPV immunisations last Monday (16/11/20) and these have now been re-scheduled for Monday 30 November 2020.

If your child is unwell then please do not send them to school. Whilst there are well documented lists of symptoms which we have all become well aware, this is a complex virus and there are increasing reports of people experiencing other symptoms which then prove to be positive cases. We have to try to avoid the situation which has impacted us so heavily in the last week. When pupils complain of being unwell in school, we are left with little option but to contact parents/carers and ask them to come and collect their child from school. This is really important in order to protect the wider school community. School does not have any staff who are medically trained (other than first aid qualifications) and we are not in a position to interpret symptoms which may present. If pupils complain of any of the symptoms or are suffering from coughs, sneezes and cold/flu like symptoms then we have to ask pupils to go home and to stay at home until these symptoms have passed.

We understand that children having to stay at home – or even whole households – is not easy nor ideal, but we are asking for your support so that we can, together, stop the spread of Covid-19, keep our children and families safe and keep our school open for the majority of children.

'I have come that they have life and have it to the full' John 10:10

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COVID 19 SECURE ARRANGEMENTS: Some pupils seem to think that they are not at risk from the virus and whilst the evidence of childhood infection seems to suggest that they are less likely to become seriously unwell this does not mean that they are less risk of being able to transfer the virus. Pupils of secondary school age are increasingly likely as they get older to be able to both contract and transmit the virus. The cavalier attitude demonstrated by some young people relating to the use of face coverings and the need to socially distance as much as possible is likely to put other pupils, adults and family groups at risk. People can be asymptomatic and spread the virus and so we all have to do whatever we can in these challenging and difficult times. Please instil into your child the need to comply with the wearing of a face mask/covering. Pupils should bring a spare mask to school each day, so that we can all try to keep everyone safe.

REMOTE LEARNING:

This is new to all of us (pupil, parents and staff) and we have been working hard not only to obtain the technology and hardware to be able to do this but also to train staff so that all safeguarding conventions can be adhered to. Blended learning is an approach to education that combines online educational materials and opportunities for interaction online with traditional place-based classroom methods. This is a new methodology and is something that will require the establishment of some new conventions and agreed behaviours as we work through this together.

Where staff are unwell or unable to attend school then lessons will be set on Show My Homework (Satchel:One). This may well be done by other departmental colleagues as some staff are unfortunately too unwell to set work. Staff do not have school laptops nor the hardware facilities that enable them to undertake remote learning from home. Some staff have used some very innovative methods of doing a mixture of work set via Show My Homework (Satchel:One) whilst being online and ready to respond to questions as they arise.

We recognise the importance of our pupils being able to continue their studies even if they are unable to attend school. We have been working to refine our Remote Learning solution which satisfies the need to safeguard our pupils online whilst allowing them to continue with their learning. Since we have had a combination of pupils and staff needing to self-isolate, added to large numbers of staff being absent for a variety of reasons, we have made every effort to continue with teaching and learning through the remote platform of Microsoft Teams. We have also continued to set homework using Show My Homework through Satchel:One.

These remote lessons follow (as far as possible – where staff attendance allows) a pupil's normal timetable. For example, pupils who have Mr Cunningham Period 1 on Monday would join that lesson via Teams. If they then have English with Miss King Period 2, they should then join that lesson and so on. Please bear in mind that staff will be teaching their full timetable so there will be a slight delay in starting the lesson to allow them to set up their lesson. The timings of lessons are as follows:

Period 1	9:30 – 10:30
Period 2	10:30 – 11:30
Period 3	12:05 – 13:05
Period 4	13:40 – 14:40
Period 5	14:40 – 15:35

A more detailed set of instructions/key principles are detailed below along with our expectations of behaviour:

- Pupils should join the appropriate lesson with their normal class teacher by using the links in their Teams' calendar
- Only pupils in that teacher's class will be admitted
- It is imperative that pupils behave appropriately during these online lessons; anyone who does not will be removed from the lesson and not be allowed to re-join
- For safeguarding reasons, there will be no 1:1 video conferencing, staff who are teaching an online session where only one pupil has arrived will end the session
- Pupils will be able to receive feedback on any work completed by submitting it to their class teacher via Show My Homework
- In the event of staff absence, work will be set using Show My Homework (Satchel:One), as has happened this week.

The safety of our pupils is paramount so we would also like to draw your attention to the following:

- Video lessons will only be hosted on school accounts and devices
- Meetings will be set up with safety and security as a priority
- Staff will remind pupils not to share private information
- Lessons may be recorded so that they can be reviewed if there is a need to and also so those who were absent can review it at a later date.

We would ask that parents ensure:

- The pupil is in a shared space in their home, rather than in their bedroom
- Pupils are dressed appropriately; this does not need to be school uniform but they must not wear pyjamas
- There is nothing in the background that may be distracting or private
- A secure internet connection is used
- Pupils are expected to keep their cameras on during lessons so teachers can monitor conduct and engagement

Attendance at these lessons will be expected and registers will be taken. Where a pupil regularly fails to attend lessons, we will be in contact to address any barriers to learning.

If pupils do not have access to IT equipment at home, please contact the relevant Pastoral Manager, Mrs Swain or Mrs Fahy.

For all queries related to remote learning, please contact Mr Turner via the contact form on the school website.

Thank you for your continued support during these challenging and worrying times.

Yours sincerely



Mr K Turmeau
Headteacher