

NR/CH

11 September 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

Thank you so much for the overwhelming support you've given us to ensure that our return to a fully open, fully functioning school has been successful. It's been amazing to welcome back returning students and to meet our new year 5 children. We have also had quite a few new students arrive in other year groups across the school and it's great to have new additions coming to our welcoming school and community.

As usual at the start of the year, we don't just welcome new students, but new and returning members of staff:

- Miss Kane returns to the English department following her maternity leave
- Mrs Davitt and Mr Robson join the maths department
- Miss Armitage joins us as a cover supervisor
- Mrs Cameron, Ms Dryden, Mr McGreevy and Miss Morley join the Learning Support Team
- Mr Chalmers and Miss Robinson join the PE team

Additionally, it's a welcome return to the DT department for Mr Donnison who, although he joined us after Easter, met younger students and reacquainted himself with some older students in person for the first time last week.

I have to admit to being a little anxious about how well our students would adapt to life as they return to school, following an extended break for many, and to a school, which is now so very different from the way it was back in March. I need not have been in the least bit concerned because they have been absolutely brilliant, and taken the new structures and systems in their stride. That is down to three things - firstly there has been genuine teamwork between staff and students to ensure a successful first week. Secondly, the hard work and determination of the entire staff team has ensured your children have been supported in their return, and are receiving the very best educational experience. Lastly, you are the key to making sure that the students have returned in uniform, on time, and ready to learn. Thank you!

Face Coverings

Since I last wrote to you at the very end of the summer break, there has been a significant rise in the number of confirmed cases of coronavirus nationally, and there are now cases reported within our community. Given that, and the fact that there can be some occasions when staff moving between rooms meet several students on the corridors for a short length of time, I now feel that we should re-think the use of face coverings and masks around our older students.

Therefore, from Monday, staff and students in year 7 and above will be allowed to wear face coverings or masks when moving around the corridors or waiting in internal social areas, ***should they choose to do so***. They should always be removed on entry to all classrooms, to ensure teaching and learning can take place unhindered.

To clarify, the wearing of face coverings or masks is not compulsory, and only applies to students in the secondary phase. People now have the choice to wear one if they feel compelled to but there is currently ***no expectation*** that they should be worn, except on school transport.

Those students who arrive by school or public transport, or who have a reusable mask with them to wear outside of school, should bring with them an appropriate bag to store their mask safely and hygienically. [You can find more details on mask use and care by following the link in this sentence.](#)

PE Kit

Thank you to all parents and carers for making sure the children are adhering to our revised uniform expectations, and for your patience and understanding around the wearing of PE kit on the days students have PE on their timetables.

Can I ask for your further support in ensuring students only come to school wearing appropriate PE kit on those days, and that the kit is compliant with [our policy as found on our uniform webpage](#). Expected kit consists of a plain white polo shirt, navy blue shorts or track suit bottoms and a navy hoodie which should either be embroidered with the school logo or plain. Having said that, given the current need to wear the PE uniform for the full day and the inevitable arrival of colder weather, the PE department are currently reviewing the list of acceptable wear and will update you soon. Please look out for further details.

Social distancing

A polite reminder that parents should not gather at the school gates, nor come to school without an appointment. If you do, please don't be offended when you're asked to leave and receive contact by telephone at a mutually convenient time. Also, all visitors who are invited to our site should wear a mask on entering the school buildings. You will understand that minimising external visitors and maximising social distancing helps keep us all safe.

Water

Our water dispensers are now available, so students can access fresh drinking water at lunch and break. Students should bring their own reusable bottles to refill at the dispensers.

What to do if you think someone has coronavirus

I know I've sent a previous version of this out before, but there have been a few subtle changes to the procedure. Please help us to keep our community safe by following the flowchart attached to the end of this letter if you suspect a case of coronavirus, and abide to [the most recent guidance on track and trace](#).

I know the advice can be confusing, and appears to be changing almost on a daily basis – if you are in any doubt as to whether you or your children should be self-isolating, please call us for advice.

One common question we've been asked quite regularly this week is "should all members of my family get tested if one is showing symptoms?" and the answer is "no". For example, if you have three children and one is showing symptoms only that one child requires a test. The rest of the household do, however, need to self-isolate until the test result is returned. If the test result is positive, the self-isolation of the affected person lasts for 10 days and for 14 days for all the other members of the household. If the test returns a negative result the isolation can end immediately and the entire family return to school and work.

Our number one priority throughout this pandemic has been the safety of our students, staff and community and it continues to be so. We will continually review and revise our policy and practices so that your children receive the very best education, whilst being cared for both physically and emotionally.

If you have any queries or comments, please don't hesitate to get in touch with us.

Best wishes

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Neil Rodgers'.

NEIL RODGERS
Executive Headteacher

Guidance for students with symptoms of COVID-19

