



06 September 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

STUDENT RETURN TO SCHOOL

We are looking forward to welcoming students back over the course of the next few days. As you will be aware, there has been a significant rise in C19 case numbers in the South West and therefore we are having to put in place more stringent risk management measures than we had expected to be doing as we enter the new academic year. I am writing with information to explain what students and parents can expect when we return to full time education on site.

As most legal restrictions have now been removed across England, our students will experience a greater degree of normality from September. In line with Stage 4 of the government's roadmap, the key changes in schools across England are:

- The removal of year group 'bubbles'.
- 'Close contacts' of a confirmed positive will no longer be required to self-isolate if they are under 18 (inc. up to 4 months after a pupil turns 18) or they are double vaccinated.
- The school will no longer be routinely involved in 'contact tracing'. This will be managed entirely by NHS Test and Trace.
- The removal of the general recommendation for the use of face coverings in education settings (unless directed by Public Health England in response to local/regional infection levels – please see below).
- Activities such as trips, sports fixtures and assemblies will resume.
- The use of hand sanitiser will continue to be encouraged.

Measures such as ventilation, extra cleaning, good hygiene and one-way systems will remain in place.

You will be aware that on Friday, 27 August, Devon, Cornwall, Plymouth and Torbay were designated areas for 'enhanced measures' due to the infection rate. This will be in force across the region for 5 weeks in the first instance and reviewed after two. The impact on schools is minor but it is now recommended by Public Health England that (unless exempt) all secondary pupils in our region wear face coverings in communal school areas during September. This will apply to corridors and assembly spaces and also on school transport. Please note that this is a recommendation for face coverings – it is not compulsory. No student will be denied an education or put under pressure/coercion if they choose not to wear a face covering. It is also recommended that adults in the classroom stay one metre away from students but, unlike before, there will not be a line at the front of the classrooms behind which staff will remain, unless the individual is clinically vulnerable.

As a school we are required to adhere to the most up to date published guidance and recommendations for schools provided by Public Health England (PHE) and the Department for Education. I fully appreciate and understand that there are contrasting, and sometimes emotive views around COVID measures and restrictions. Our utmost priority will always be the safety of the community as a whole, while aiming to strike a balance between providing our students with a high-quality educational experience, along with lots of opportunities to develop socially, personally and culturally. As I said in a previous letter, I am interested in receiving feedback from parents/carers regarding measures we are taking from September. The new guidelines from PHE placing us in a designated area for enhanced measures, somewhat overrides this, as very little will have changed from where we left things in July. However, if you wish to provide some feedback, please click [here](#) – your comments will be taken into consideration as we move forward.

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Finally, we know there has been much talk in the news about vaccinations for 12–15 year olds. I would like to confirm that so far there has been no communication with schools at all about this, including whether schools are expected to have any role in the process, such as hosting on site.

For your information, our COVID risk assessment, which reflects the national changes to all schools, can be found on our website under the policies section.

Thank you, as ever, for your support and I look forward to seeing all students later this week.

Best wishes



Mrs J Veal
Executive Head teacher

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