

## Weekly News Update Friday 16 October 2020

### Changes to the school timetable (post October half-term)

As we reach the final week of this half-term we have been reviewing our timetable for when we return. Daylight saving time comes to an end on Sunday 25 October and in order to allow a safe return home we will adapt the timetable so that those in Year 9 and 11 will have period 1, rather than the current period 6.

The key timings are morning registration which will start at **8:40am** and will last for 10 minutes in length for all students. This will allow students to wash hands or sanitise as they arrive and then go to their tutor rooms. Here they will be registered, and we can make sure they have equipment (students cannot share equipment still) and are ready for learning.

All year groups will continue to have a dedicated time slot to access the canteen, both at break and lunch time. This means we can keep the students separated by year groups. Students in Year 7 will access the canteen 10 minutes earlier at break and lunch time to allow for ease of access. The current card system and simplified access to the canteen will continue to operate and allow for ease of access.

Lunchtime will be five minutes shorter than usual, with afternoon lessons starting at 1:10pm for period 4 and 2:10pm period 5. This will mean school finishes at 3.10pm and allows us to stagger the release of students out of the school. A limited number of Year 11's will also be able to use the library for revision after school.

As a leadership team we have always sought to follow national guidelines and also act in a manner that supports safety measures for students, staff and the community in a thorough and pragmatic way.

Our one-way system works well, however in order to add an additional layer of safety and to comply with the same levels as in shops and the wider community we will expect face masks to be worn as students move from classroom to classroom as they move through our corridors from after half-term.

If large numbers of students move inside the school on other occasions, face coverings will also be expected to be worn. Students who have a medical condition will not be expected to wear a face covering and a 'pass card' will be issued. Please liaise with your child's Head of Year/Pastoral Manager if you need support in this area. Our staff will follow the same arrangements.

When students are outside for a sustained period of time they will not be expected to wear face coverings as the risks are deemed to be significantly lower in the open air and areas can be appropriately managed. Students can, however, wear a face covering if they wish to, but everyone should be aware of the risks of repeatedly putting a face covering on and off.

When students are travelling on the bus, as they currently do, they will be expected to wear a face mask. Staff on bus duty will have an option to wear face coverings but may not because of the need for direct and clear communication with students and each other.

Every child **MUST** bring a face covering and a bag to put it in every day. The face covering must be plain and have no writing or logos on it. Any student or member of staff wishing to wear a covering throughout the day, including in classrooms, can do so as per the current policy.

**There are, of course, an almost infinite number of scenarios that could arise in relation to this policy. It is important therefore that teachers and support staff are trusted to apply the policy in a proportionate and reasonable way.**

We will not look to sanction students if they 'make a mistake' but if a student acts in a way that is clearly to the detriment of the safety of others, then appropriate sanctions would be applied. As ever, colleagues and I will take a pragmatic approach.

As you can imagine, colleagues and I are having to spend significant amounts of time on our preparations and we would be grateful, therefore, if you can allow us to continue with our work and only make contact with your

child's Head of Year/Pastoral Manager if your concerns are of an urgent nature. We will continue to do everything reasonable to ensure that conditions promote a safe and positive environment.

### **Post-16 Information and College Applications**

Following our week of Post-16 events in September, all the videos, links and information that colleges have provided us with remain on our school website: [https://public.dorothy-stringer.co.uk/ds/Pages/post\\_16\\_pathways.aspx](https://public.dorothy-stringer.co.uk/ds/Pages/post_16_pathways.aspx)

In the coming weeks, all Year 11 students will be invited to have a 1:1 conversation with their PSHE teacher regarding their college and subject choices. As we receive information from post-16 providers we will publish it in our weekly newsletter. However, we do recommend that you use the links on our website to keep an eye on events as they are listed on college websites.

Please remember that **all students should have completed and submitted their college applications by Friday 27 November**. If you have any questions regarding the college application process, please contact your child's PSHE teacher.

**Word of the week: Vociferous** (adj) = vociferous people express their opinions loudly and repeatedly

Take care and stay safe.

Matt Hillier | Headteacher