

Weekly News Update Thursday 5 November 2020

Following the Government announcement of a new national lockdown starting today, Thursday 5 November, please be reassured that, unless Government guidance changes, we will be remaining open during the period of the lockdown.

The Government is prioritising the wellbeing and long-term futures of our young people and, as such, will not be closing schools. Please also be reassured that students will still be maintaining regular handwashing and sanitising throughout the day, as well as all the other virus transmission control measures we have adopted.

Late on Wednesday afternoon we were provided with an update from the government about the new restrictions which came into effect today. The key summary points are;

- It will now be mandatory for face coverings to be worn in the communal areas of all secondary schools. We had already moved to this position owing to our change in timetable after half-term. Students should put their face covering on as they leave the lesson and enter the corridors. This has worked well and I thank you for your continued support. Students do not need to wear their coverings in lessons unless they feel more comfortable doing so. Staff are following the same guidance as well.
- The guidance clarifies that clinically extremely vulnerable staff and pupils should not come into school. Staff who are extremely clinically vulnerable are now working from home. Teaching staff who are extremely clinically vulnerable will be delivering Teams lessons into the classrooms so normal teaching will be able to continue. We will have another colleague in the classroom to support students. Those students who are classified as extremely clinically vulnerable by their consultant are also accessing their learning from home.
- The guidance also includes the postponement of after-school clubs, so we have need to cancel our before-school and after-school drama, art and sports clubs for the next month. Lessons in these subjects will still operate as per the normal school timetable. Year 11s will still be able to access the library after school for revision as they are distanced and in their bubble.

The staggered canteen slots have worked really well at lunchtime. It is more complex at breaktime as the time period is shorter, but it is possible to manage. We reminded our students again today about their times at break time to allow for ease of access.

We have also adjusted the times for the end of the school day to allow for a greater staggered exit, as follows:

- Year 8 – Leave at 3.05pm

- Year 9 and 10 – Leave at 3.10pm
- Year 11 and 7 – Leave at 3.15pm

It is an anxious time for so many in the community but by working together we can continue to keep our students safe, in school and learning.

Year 11 Mocks

Year 11 mocks start next week and we will ask students to wear face coverings as they enter the sports hall and take their seats in their designated places. Face coverings can be removed for the duration of the examination. Students should be in full uniform, however they may wear a coat (in addition to their school jumper) in the hall as the doors will be kept ajar for ventilation.

In preparation for the mocks the Maths team have been delivering live webinars which were really successful last term as well. There have been sessions at all levels and Miss Taylor, Head of Maths, will send out the links via email in case students wish to re-watch the sessions.

We wish our Year 11s good luck in their mock exams.

Two Minute Silence for Remembrance Day

Across the country a silence is traditionally held at 11am on the 11 November to commemorate the moment in 1918 when the Armistice (cease fire) ended the First World War. This year we will mark Remembrance Day by holding a two minute silence on Wednesday 11 November.

Maths Team - Movember

The Maths Department's male staff are growing moustaches in support of Movember, and they'd really like your support. Movember is the leading charity changing the face of men's health on a global scale, focussing on mental health and suicide prevention, prostate cancer and testicular cancer. You can make a donation to their fund-raising efforts using this link <https://movember.com/t/stringer-bros?mc=1>.

Easy Fundraising – Supporting student Health and Wellbeing - #ShopForStringer

Dorothy Stringer has teamed up with easyfundraising to help raise funds to support our students' mental health and wellbeing. By signing up to #ShopForStringer the whole school community can collect donations, for free, to support the school every time you shop online with over 4,000 retailers.

For 2020-2021 we aim to raise £2,020 to enable more students to access to the school's specialist support and provisions.

Students are receiving easy fundraising cards and an information leaflet tomorrow, and can sign up at **easyfundraising.org.uk** and select Dorothy Stringer as your cause.

For more information visit our website: https://public.dorothy-stringer.co.uk/ds/Pages/shop_for_stringer.aspx

Word of the week: Demure (adj) = reserved, modest

Take care and stay safe.

Matt Hillier | Headteacher