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17th August 2021

Dear Parent,

In line with the latest government guidance around Covid-19 I am writing to you to explain how this will affect your child on their return to school in September.

Online Lessons

We will continue to deliver on-line lessons to those that have to self-isolate because they have tested Positive (as long as they are well enough) for Covid-19.

International Pupils

We will continue to deliver on-line lesson to those who are abroad and face challenges returning to Ellesmere due to Covid-19 travel restrictions.

Face Coverings

In line with government guidance – dining and transport.

Although the government has removed the requirement to wear face coverings in law, it expects and recommends that they are worn in enclosed and crowded spaces and public transport and this recommendation applies to schools. For Ellesmere, this will mean that pupils from Years 7 to 13 will be asked to wear face coverings in and around the dining hall at all meal times and on the College's daily transport to and from school.

If we have an outbreak at school, public health might advise us that face coverings should temporarily be worn in communal areas or classrooms (by pupils staff and visitors, unless exempt). If this happens, we will let you know.

Arrival at School

When pupils arrive in school on Monday, 6th September, they should go straight to their tutor rooms and not mix with other pupils at this stage. Boarders should go to House and report to their Housemaster/Mistress or Housemother on arrival and not go straight to their room. If possible, parents should not come into House. If you wish to speak with a member of staff please arrange this in advance.



LFD Testing Programme

In line with government guidance, as pupils will potentially mix with lots of other people during the Summer holidays, all secondary school pupils (Year 7 – Year 13) will receive 2 on-site lateral flow device tests, 3 to 5 days apart, on their return in the autumn term, providing consent has been given.

Pupils should then continue to test twice weekly at home until the end of September, when this will be reviewed.

Confirmatory PCR tests

Staff and pupils with a positive LFD test result should self-isolate in line with the stay at home guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection. They will also need to get a free PCR test to check if they have COVID-19.

Whilst awaiting the PCR result, the individual should continue to self-isolate.

If the PCR test is taken within 2 days of the positive lateral flow test, and is negative, it overrides the self-test LFD test and the pupil can return to school, as long as the individual doesn't have COVID-19 symptoms.

Tracing close contacts and Isolation

Contacts from a school setting will only be traced by NHS Test and Trace where the positive case specifically identifies the individual as being a close contact. This is likely to be a small number of individuals who would be most at risk of contracting COVID-19 due to the nature of the close contact.

Children under the age of 18 years old will no longer be required to self-isolate if they are contacted by NHS Test and Trace as a close contact of a positive COVID-19 case.

Instead, children will be contacted by NHS Test and Trace, informed they have been in close contact with a positive case and advised to take a PCR test. We would encourage all individuals to take a PCR test if advised to do so.

18-year-olds will be treated in the same way as children until 6 months after their 18th birthday, to allow them the opportunity to get fully vaccinated.

School Transport

- Buses will run as normal from Monday 6th September, 2021. As already noted, the wearing of a face covering and adhering to seating places remain the same as last term.



Parents Driving to School

To help with the flow of traffic and also help reduce congestion/time on site, we are keeping the different drop-off/pickup points and a one-way system between 8.20am–8.40am and 5.15pm–5.40pm during the school week.

Years 3 to 6: Enter school through the gate near Lower School and drop off/pickup in the Lower School bus park and then exit through the same gate.

Years 7 and 8: Enter school through the gate near Lower School and drop off/pickup in the Tennis Centre car park and then exit through the same gate.

Years 9 to 13: Enter school through the gate near Lower School and drop off/pickup near St Hilda's and in the main quad. You should leave by turning left out of the main quad to exit down at the main gate of the school, (passing the swimming pool). Please **do not** park on the road by the pool. If you are waiting for a swimmer please park on Parry's.

This one-way system and new drop off/pickup system are only for the start and end of the school day, 8.20am-8.40am and 5.15pm-5.40pm. Thank you for your co-operation with this.

Equipment

All pupils should bring to school their own text books, pens, pencils, ruler, calculator and school bag.

Any restrictions in place will be reviewed at the end of September and again at half term. For all intents and purposes, the school will be operating as normal, with lessons, games and activities taking place as before.

Kind regards,

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A Woodard School

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