



05 March 2021

Dear Parent/Guardian

First and foremost - we are nearly there!!! It is so exciting to think that the students are nearly back at school. The Year 11 and 10 students who came onto site this morning were clearly really pleased to be back and seeing their friends and the feeling of elation amongst the staff was similar.

It has been another very busy week as you can imagine. I know we have sent you **A LOT** of information this week and I both apologise and don't apologise for this issue! The timetabling of testing, reopening and getting our face-to-face lessons going as quickly as possible is certainly a logistical challenge (made slightly more complex by the fact that so many of our students come to school by bus!). However, the safe re-opening of school is so important and ensuring our community: students, staff, parents and all members of the MECE family are as safe as can be is so important. We are all really hoping that the next few weeks can be incident free and the students can build a momentum and normality between now and the Easter holidays.

Please be reminded that:

Year 10 and 11 return to school at 8.45 am on Monday 8th March

Year 7,8 and 9 return to school at 8.45am on Tuesday 9th March

Testing, testing...

We are grateful for the 93% of our community who have filled the consent form for testing. The security of knowing that our community is Covid free is so important and ensures that my staff have no qualms about coming to work. Our students will be tested for a second and third time over the next week and a half and then home test kits will be issued. More details of home testing will follow in two weeks' time.

Testing schedule update

- Years 7, 8 and 9 students that can walk to school or can be brought up by their parent/guardian should arrive at school from 10am to 12pm.
- Any students who currently haven't been tested will be done so on the morning of their first day back at school.

Face masks and risk mitigation

Face masks and face coverings have been a hot topic in the news in the last few weeks and we have had some enquiries from parents regarding this. Whilst I understand it is an emotive topic can I please remind parents that as always, we are doing our best to work within the guidance we have been given by the Department for Education, which can often be open to interpretation. What I can state categorically is that we want our students to follow the recommended advice of wearing face masks in lessons. A link to the latest government guidance can be found [here](#). We are asking that parents do communicate to us if their child has any issues wearing a face mask. We will also be following other measures such as increased ventilation, one-way systems, key stage bubbles, strict seating plans and bus bubbles to mitigate transmission risks as much as possible.



Year 11

I particularly feel for our Year 11s who have had much of their GCSE period interrupted over the last two years. We are currently working with the Trust to construct a programme of assessment that ensures that our students finish the course with the best possible chance of success. Details of this will be shared with parents and students over the next few weeks but you have my assurances that we are determined that these students acquire the best possible grades.

Getting ready for the off...

In order to prepare for the re-opening we used Thursday as a chance to bring our staff together for a reboot and refresher in our values and expectations. I led a training session on behaviour and culture which was supported by Mrs Benham's presentation on de-escalation strategies. Mrs Hills led a session on our teaching and learning mode of operation and Miss Bliss on the next few weeks with Year 11. As you can imagine, it is 11 weeks since the staff were teaching in the classroom and the re-opening has given us an opportunity to revisit and remind staff of all the great habits and routines that can be used to make their lessons as successful as possible

Year 6 Offers Day and feedback

The week began with 'Offers Day' when Year 6 parents received their secondary school offers. On Thursday after school I met with over 20 parents (on Zoom obviously) who had received offers to discuss our provision, our curriculum and why we are such a different school to the Ofsted report that is now 4 years old. In relation to this I had some screen shots shared of local Facebook forums relating to parental queries about local schools which have been incredibly heartening. The streams I saw had a succession of incredibly positive comments from current parents about our school.

My staff of the week are Mrs Bullivant, Mr Baker and Mr Perry for their work in ensuring our pop-up school ran so smoothly. Mrs Bullivant also qualifies as she, alongside Mrs Blackall is one of our test leaders and both have done an admirable job in ensuring it has all worked so smoothly.

My student of the week this week goes to Ciara in Year 11 who has raised hundreds of pounds to support a young boy who needs treatment for leukaemia. Ciara did this by being sponsored to shave her head. This is a wonderful gesture and embodies the community spirit that I want our students to have. I think Ciara's gesture acts as a great example to our younger students and I am extremely proud to have students like her in our school.

Lastly, I would like to leave you with this link which I think encapsulates how we are feeling at the moment. The PIXL club are an organisation of hundreds of schools that promote best practice and I think they've summed it up nicely with this.

<https://vimeo.com/519485764>

Take care and have a fab weekend.

Yours sincerely

Andy Hartley
Headteacher