



2nd September 2020

To Parents & Carers,
Years 7 to 11

Dear Parents & Carers,

We hope you and your children have had an enjoyable summer break and that you are looking forward to the new academic year. We are delighted to be welcoming all our students back into school after what has been an extraordinary six months.

Whilst much of what is contained in this letter was sent to parents on 20th July, we have updated some of the details previously given and added some new information where relevant, so please take the time to read this letter carefully.

New and/or updated information:

Face Masks

Responding to the recent guidance, we are giving students the option to wear a face mask while moving around the school site. These should be of plain and appropriate design. Students need to remove them and then use hand sanitiser when entering the classroom or eating area. As infection levels are currently low in this area, we are not making masks compulsory at this stage but will continue to monitor the situation and follow the latest guidance. It would, therefore, be sensible to ensure that your child has a face mask in case we need to move to compulsory wearing.

Buses

We are still awaiting final information from some of the bus companies, but our understanding is that students travelling by bus should wear face masks and follow the instructions of the bus driver, which may include sitting in year group sections of the bus.

PE Kit

We are aware that there are some delivery issues with Gray Palmer and that some items of PE kit are currently out of stock. Therefore, if your child is awaiting kit, they may wear a plain black t-shirt, black shorts and white sports socks as their PE uniform in the interim period.

On days when students are wearing their PE kit all day, students who wear skorts for PE may wear plain black leggings underneath, or a kilt or plain black jogging bottoms over the top of their skorts if they wish. Students who wear shorts will also be allowed to wear plain black leggings underneath, or plain black jogging bottoms over the top.

Please also see the paragraph on page 5 for further information regarding uniform.

Drop off and pick up

Parents are asked not to leave their vehicle while dropping students off by car in the Sports Hall car park at the beginning of the day. At the end of the day, to ensure all students can leave the site quickly to avoid crowding, **we will not allow any cars onto the site until AFTER students walking home have left.** The Copperfields gate will, therefore, only be opened at 3.30pm.

Students needing to be collected should wait in their classroom until that time and then go to the Sports Hall car park to be collected. To avoid traffic entering Copperfields and thereby slowing the exit of students, and to avoid disruption to local residents, **we would ask parents not to arrive before 3.30pm.** As always, parents are **not permitted** to either drop off or collect their children at the main school entrance.

The Learning Centre and Homework club

We have put in place a rota for different year groups to use the Learning Centre before school, at break and at lunchtime. This will be explained to students on their first day back. After school, the Learning Centre will be available until 4.30pm (4pm on Fridays) for Year 7 only. Year 11 will be able to use D3 afterschool until 4.30pm (4pm on Fridays).

Responding to positive COVID cases

You may have seen information in the media about the responses that schools may need to make in the event of positive cases of COVID. You may have read that responses may need to include groups of students self-isolating or the implementation of an attendance rota system. Please be reassured that, in the event of a positive case, we would keep parents informed and would immediately seek and follow further instructions from the local Health Protection Team. We have already made contingency plans to ensure that teaching and learning is disrupted as little as possible in such scenarios.

Quarantine

If your child has been advised to quarantine on their return to the UK from a trip abroad, they must do so and **not** attend school during the quarantine period. In this instance, you must inform the school immediately so that work can be issued for completion at home.

Previously issued information:

It is our intention to ensure that every child returns to school unless they are ill. They will be following their full curriculum of subjects and their teachers will be teaching them in the classroom. We are very much looking forward to welcoming all students back to the school. We have missed them very much and we need to thank them, and you as their parents, for the exceptionally positive approach that you have taken to supporting the virtual school during the lockdown period. The ICT and independent learning skills we have all developed during lockdown will help us to meet the challenges of the coming year.

The start of term

To ensure all students are inducted thoroughly we will be bringing year groups back across 3 days:

- 1) **Year 7 and Year 12 students joining us from other schools will start on Friday 4th September**
- 2) **Years 10, 11 and all other Year 12 students will start on Monday 7th September**
- 3) **Years 8,9 and 13 will start on Tuesday 8th of September**

What follows is an outline of the measures we are putting in place to make County High as safe as possible for staff and students and comply with the guidance from the government, whilst still offering a full curriculum. Public funding does not enable us to make significant alterations to our premises, however changes to the way we operate and behave will have a substantial impact on safety. If you wish to read the full risk assessment, you will find it on our website.

The school day

To ensure all students can get to buses in an orderly and socially distanced way, we will be taking five minutes out of lunchtime so that the school day will finish at 3.15pm for all students at this time. To reduce crowding, we will be staggering the exit of students, with classes being released from 3.05pm. This will not impact on curriculum time as we will be moving Registration to the end of the day.

Equipment needed by all students

Students will be expected to have their OWN equipment in school each day. This is to remove the need to borrow equipment. They should all have:

- Alcohol gel/hand sanitiser
- Pen, pencil, ruler and eraser
- Dry marker pen (for use on mini-whiteboards)
- Calculator
- Glue stick
- Small paper cutting scissors (with rounded safety blades)
- Colouring pencils
- A water bottle

Reducing contacts between students (especially face-to-face contacts and between students in different year groups)

- 1) All year groups will have a designated food outlet and eating area and it will be used by just one year group at a time for their break/lunch time.
- 2) Years 7, 8 and 13 will have their break between periods 1 and 2 and their lunch between periods 3 and 4.
- 3) Years 9, 10, 11 and 12 will have their break and lunch at the usual time.
- 4) All year groups will have a designated area of the field for use at break and lunchtime and they will be expected to be outside during these times. We will also designate a sheltered zone for use on wet days.
- 5) There will be a one-way system in operation throughout the school to reduce crowding on the corridors and students will usually be allowed to go straight into classrooms, rather than waiting on the corridor.
- 6) Classrooms will be laid out in the safest way we can – in nearly all cases this will be front facing desks.
- 7) Lessons with additional risks (PE, Music, Drama, Science and Technology) will have additional risk assessments and measures in place, in line with the subject specific guidance. For example, there will be no whole-class singing and no games of rugby at this stage.
- 8) There will be no extracurricular activity in the first 2 weeks of term. Extracurricular activity will be year group specific in nearly all cases.
- 9) Any mixing between year groups (for example in detentions) will be socially distanced, with students from different year groups kept at least 2 metres apart at all times.
- 10) The start of the day has a natural stagger, as students tend to come on site from 8.15am. We will continue to allow this to happen and will ask students to move straight to their period 1 lesson and wait for their teacher in the classroom, rather than waiting on the corridors. The exception will be for PE and Technology lessons, where students will wait outside.
- 11) We are moving registration to the end of the day and we will stagger the end of the day by 10 minutes to ensure students can leave school with their own year group and with less crowding. This will not impact on lesson time. No student will be released from school before 3.05pm.

Reducing transmission of infection

- 1) We will have the expectation that all staff and students are vigilant about any symptoms that could indicate a Covid-19 infection
 - **a high temperature** – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)

- **a new, continuous cough** – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- **a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste** – this means you have noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

We require individuals with any of these symptoms to stay at home and seek a test and share the outcome of that with school.

If the result of the test is negative, the student can return to school immediately.

- 2) There will be additional cleaning in place (especially for high risk areas such as toilets, eating areas and doors).
- 3) Where it is safe to do so, doors will be propped open to reduce touch points.
- 4) Doors and windows will usually be left open to improve ventilation.
- 5) Students will be instructed to use alcohol gel at the start of each lesson and before eating. We would ask parents to equip students with their own alcohol gel to make this process more efficient, but we will also provide it in school in case anyone forgets or runs out.
- 6) Equipment will be cleaned more frequently and between uses by different year groups.
- 7) Students will be regularly reminded of the importance of “Catch it, bin it, kill it” and tissues will be placed in all classrooms.
- 8) Students will be regularly reminded of the importance of hand hygiene, including how to wash hands effectively.
- 9) Teachers will be kept safe by being advised to keep at 2 metres social distance from students and other staff wherever possible. They have the option of wearing face shields.

Temperature taking

We will not be taking the temperature of students on arrival at school in the morning, but we would urge parents to be vigilant and to check temperatures at home if you think your child shows any sign of being unwell.

It is vital that students remain at home if they display any of the coronavirus symptoms.

Keeping the school community safe through following Track and Trace

- 1) Should we get a positive test in our school we will contact our local Public Health advisors and we will follow their instructions as to which students, classes or even year groups will need to self-isolate for 14 days.
- 2) Should any students have to work from home, we will set work on TEAMS for them and we will expect this to be completed in the usual way

Keeping everyone safe and ensuring everyone can make rapid progress, after this period away from school

- 1) We expect all students to meet our behaviour expectations and to show a positive attitude and to work hard on all tasks.
- 2) Students **must**:
 - a. Follow all instructions
 - b. Fully follow the heightened hygiene expectations, as outlined above
 - c. Comply with all the new systems (e.g. one-way routes around the school, staying in designated places in class, socialising in school within their year group)
 - d. Not disrupt the learning of others
 - e. Not bring phones in to school (any phones seen or heard will be confiscated)

Any student who cannot meet these expectations will be asked to work from home on
TEAMS

Uniform

We are advised that students do not need to wash their uniform each day and we can safely return to our normal formal uniform. **Therefore, we will expect all students to be in full uniform in September.** However, on days when a student has a PE lesson they should come to school in their PE kit, including trainers, **with their blazer on as well**; the PE kit with blazer will be the uniform for those days of the week as we wish to remove the need to change in the small PE changing rooms at this time. This is in line with the current advice from the government that the use of changing rooms should be minimised. *Please also see the paragraph on page 1: PE kit*

Many of you will be wondering in what ways school will feel/be different to usual and in what ways it will be the same.

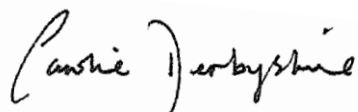
The main differences will be felt at break and lunchtime. To ensure we can separate all students' eating arrangements, we will be staggering our breaks and lunchtime and opening different eating outlets for each year group. To ensure we have a fair and efficient food offer, these food outlets will offer a more "grab and go" style of food for this period and we will not be running a traditional hot meal from the canteen. There will still be a meal deal, but this might be a sandwich and a piece of fruit or a pizza slice and a home-baked cake, for example. Students who bring in their own packed lunch will eat in their year group's designated eating area.

In lessons, students may also notice some differences. There will only be group work in very particular circumstances and most lessons will have a more "traditional", front-led style. There will be opportunities for consolidation of the work done in Virtual School during the summer term, with some additional sessions built in for those who need them.

However, in lots of ways school will be the same. We remain a team of passionate professionals and we want to inspire and educate our students and also support their well-being. The sessions and lessons that were run in school in June and July were enjoyed by staff and students alike. We know our students are keen to return and work hard and we are delighted to be able to welcome them all back. Of course, we will continue to review the measures that are in place, alongside all current advice from the government, and will advise you when we need to make any changes.

The last six months have been an extraordinary time for all of us. We wish that we could now move on and put this period of crisis behind us, but we recognise that the academic year ahead is unlikely to be free from disruption. We will continue to do everything in our power to ensure that the education that your children receive is of exceptional quality.

Yours sincerely,



Caroline Derbyshire
Executive Headteacher, SWCHS



Polly Lankester
Headteacher, SWCHS

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