

28th August 2020

Dear parents/carers,

Further to my letter to you at the end of last term, I am writing to you to confirm some details and also include a couple of new updates.

As a reminder, we have a staggered start to the new academic year:

Monday 31st August - Bank Holiday

Tuesday 1st September - Development Day (no students in)

Wednesday 2nd September - Development Day - Year 13 timetables are available from reception (very few changes to this year), Year 12 student enrolment in the Hall (no lessons)

Thursday 3rd September - Year 13 students – 10.35 am start, Year 12 student enrolment in the Hall (no lessons)

Friday 4th September - Year 13 students – 10.35 am start, Year 12 student enrolment in the Hall (no lessons).

Monday 7th September - Year 13 students – 10.35 am start, Year 12 students – 10.45 am start

Tuesday 8th September - onwards: - normal times (see table)

	Year 12	Year 13
Period 1	9.00 – 9.50	8.50 – 10.00
Periods 2 and 3	10.45 – 12.30	10.35 – 12.40
Periods 4 and 5	13.20 – 15.05	13.10 – 15.15

We are opening for all students and the Government guidance means we need to keep students in their year group bubbles as much as we can. This is being done by modifying the lessons times for Year 12 and 13 (as above).

Other specific changes are the retention of the one way system, entrances / exits and social areas labelled Year 12 or 13.

If a student is in a class with both Year 12 and 13 present, they should socially distance themselves from the other year group.

In line with Government guidance, all classrooms (except ICT suites), have been rearranged to ensure that all of the students will be facing the front, not set out in groups of tables where the students would be facing each other.

One area which has had a more recent update is related to the use of face coverings. You may be aware through formal media coverage or through social media, that on Tuesday 25th August, the Government announced a change in their stance on face coverings in schools/colleges with secondary aged children and above. The guidance was then updated the following day. This guidance basically sets out two scenarios.

One is where a school is in an area which has local restrictions in place.

The guidance states that

'Consistent with WHO's new advice, schools and colleges should take additional precautionary measures in areas where the transmission of the virus is high. These areas are defined as [areas of national government intervention](#). Information on areas with a status of 'intervention' can be found in the [National coronavirus \(COVID-19\) surveillance report](#), which is updated every week.

In these intervention areas, in education settings where Year 7 and above are educated, face coverings should be worn by adults (staff and visitors) and pupils when moving around indoors, such as in corridors and communal areas where social distancing is difficult to maintain. As in the general approach, it will not usually be necessary to wear face coverings in the classroom, where protective measures already mean the risks are lower, and they may inhibit teaching and learning.'

Therefore, I can confirm that should we reach a scenario where we have local restrictions imposed, we will be following the guidance above and all staff, students and visitors will be expected to wear a face covering in communal areas.

The second scenario is obviously where a school is not in an area where local restrictions are in place, which is the current situation for us. The guidance for this is as below

'Nationwide, the government is not recommending face coverings are necessary in education settings generally because a system of control, applicable to all education environments, provides additional mitigating measures. Schools and colleges will have the discretion to require face coverings in indoor communal areas where social distancing cannot be safely managed, if they believe that it is right in their particular circumstances.'

Given the current Government data, the risk on the Isle of Wight is very low in comparison to an area which is having local restrictions enforced. Therefore, we have taken the decision to allow the voluntary use of face coverings in communal areas for students and for staff. This however does mean that face coverings must be worn following the Government guidance:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own>

An extract is below:

A face covering should:

- *cover your nose and mouth while allowing you to breathe comfortably*
- *fit comfortably but securely against the side of the face*
- *be secured to the head with ties or ear loops*
- *be made of a material that you find to be comfortable and breathable, such as cotton*
- *ideally include at least two layers of fabric (the World Health Organisation recommends three depending on the fabric used)*
- *unless disposable, it should be able to be washed with other items of laundry according to fabric washing instructions and dried without causing the face covering to be damaged*

When wearing a face covering you should:

- *wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser before putting a face covering on*
- *avoid wearing on your neck or forehead*

- *avoid touching the part of the face covering in contact with your mouth and nose, as it could be contaminated with the virus*
- *change the face covering if it becomes damp or if you've touched it*
- *avoid taking it off and putting it back on a lot in quick succession (for example, when leaving and entering shops on a high street)*

When removing a face covering:

- *wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser before removing*
- *only handle the straps, ties or clips*
- *do not give it to someone else to use*
- *if single-use, dispose of it carefully in a residual waste bin and do not recycle*
- *if reusable, wash it in line with manufacturer's instructions at the highest temperature appropriate for the fabric*
- *wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser once removed.*

I would like to also remind you of some of the measures that are in place to support a safe environment.

No-one displaying symptoms of COVID-19 is allowed on site. Anyone displaying symptoms

- a new continuous cough
- a high temperature
- a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

must follow the Government guidance and self-isolate for at least 10 days from when symptoms started and arrange to have a test. All other household members must stay at home and not leave the house for 14 days. The 14-day period starts from the day when the first person in the household became ill or if they do not have symptoms, from the day their test was taken. Full guidance is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

All students, staff and visitors are expected to adhere to good hand and respiratory hygiene by washing hands with soap and warm water for 20 seconds or using hand sanitiser available and following the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' routine.

I will be expecting students to behave appropriately and show respect to each other and to members of staff.

Finally, I would like to reiterate that we have, at all times, followed Government guidance, and we will continue to do so, as and when this is created or updated.



David Mumford
Head of VI Form