



Dear Parents/Carers and Students

WGS Newsletter (02) 03/09/2021

We are looking forward to welcoming students back to school on Monday, after a successful start today for year 7 and some of our new year 12s. I will send out a start-of-year newsletter next week with all the usual information about new staff and events but I wanted to write ahead of Monday to give you more information about the new term, given the changes to the Covid regulations during the summer.

New Covid guidance was issued to schools on 27th August, confirming that bubbles are no longer required in school. Therefore, we will start the year with students being taught in specialist classrooms, rather than remaining mostly in one area as they did for the majority of last year. The second major change is that the vast majority of students will not now need to be sent home if they come into contact with a positive case. This will lead to fewer students having to self-isolate and therefore less disruption to their learning.

It is important though that we maintain some sensible measures in school to reduce the spread of infection. The number of Covid cases is rising locally and all schools have been asked to ensure that they have contingency plans in place to return to 'bubbles' or even to return to remote learning. We will continue to put in sensible measures to help prevent cases in school and to prevent needing to use these contingency plans. These will be:

- Students must continue to wear face coverings on school and public transport
- We will continue to promote good hand washing and use of sanitiser
- We will encourage students to wear face coverings in corridors when moving between lessons; this does not apply to students who are exempt and students will not be challenged about face coverings. Last year students were excellent about this and I am sure the same will be true this year. Students are not required to wear face coverings in lessons, but are allowed to do so if they wish to.
- We will reduce the number of live assemblies for the first few weeks
- The school day has been adapted so that only half the school has lunch at one time; please see our website for the timings of the day in the 'For Parents' section.
- Each year group will have designated toilets and there will be a small number of shared use toilets
- If any student develops any of the three main Covid symptoms when in school, we will send them home and they should have a PCR test as soon as possible. If your child tests positive, they will have to self-isolate. Please inform the school about this and we will put remote learning in place.

We are awaiting information about vaccinations for under 16s. We have no information on this as yet. We will keep families fully informed and no action will be taken without parental consent.

We are very keen to get students back into learning for the new school year and to be talking about matters other than Covid! However, it is important that we remain alert to the local and national situation to avoid more disruption to education this year.

Please look out for the separate email about our delayed Virtual Summer Concert next Tuesday; it would be lovely to see lots of people there.

Yours sincerely

Mr R Shadbolt
Headteacher