



13<sup>th</sup> November 2020

Dear Parent or Carer,

**Parent and Carer Update – 13<sup>th</sup> November**

I hope this update finds you well. It's been another busy week here at the College, and I wanted to take the opportunity to highlight a couple of important points around equipment and catering, as well as giving an update on face coverings.

**1. Face Coverings**

You'll be aware from my update last week that face coverings now have to be worn by staff and students whilst indoors - the only exception being during lessons, when eating or drinking, and if the person is exempt.

It has been so encouraging to see how students have taken to this adjustment. Staff have been proactive in reminding and noticing when students have forgotten face coverings, and are sensitive to those who cannot wear them because of an exemption.

There have been some understandable issues with students occasionally forgetting to bring a covering to school with them. From Monday, form tutors will have a small supply of face coverings for emergencies and will contact home if your young person forgets.

Please support your young person by reminding how their wearing of a face covering contributes to the safety of our whole community and by ensuring that they have a suitable face covering with them when they come to College.

**2. Catering**

You'll know from our previous updates that we have been continually reviewing with Aspens, our catering provider, how to try and meet the challenges that keeping year groups in their bubbles present when trying to make sure they get access to catering on site.

From next Monday, we will be trialling a new approach that opens the main canteen area to enable more students to a 'grab and go' food selection in addition to being able to pre-order as you can currently. We're able to do this safely by physically dividing the canteen with different entrances and exits for year groups.

Unfortunately, we cannot fit all year groups through the canteen safely at break and lunch whilst maintaining the integrity of our 'bubbles', but for year groups not able to access the canteen we have worked with Aspens so that they will also be able to select a better range of food and drink at other points around the site.

Further details around the changes and reminders of how to order have come to you today in a separate letter.

### **3. Student Equipment**

Whilst we always have a stock of equipment for students to access, our lessons and your young person's learning flow better when all students have the right equipment for learning. Please check and make sure your young person is coming to school with sufficient pens, pencils, a scientific calculator and a ruler as a minimum. Having a glue stick and colouring pencils is also extremely useful. Given the current epidemic, it is also sensible that we limit the loaning and returning of basic equipment across students within bubbles.

### **4. Summer Exams 2021: GCSE and A-levels**

Many of you will have seen the recent announcements by England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland about their individual approaches to running exams next summer. The DfE, for England, are adamant that GCSE and A-level exams will go ahead, albeit starting 3 weeks later in the summer term.

We know some students and parents and carers are concerned around the pressure their Y11s and Y13s are feeling around assessments and mock exams, and the impact of the lockdown earlier this year on their learning, alongside further absences (whether student or staff) this year related to COVID-19.

Please rest assured we remain absolutely committed to working with you and your young person to make sure they are prepared and confident to sit their exams. Teachers want to support students who are worried, so please encourage them to disclose any worries about learning. Your young person's tutor is always a good first point of contact, as is Amy Withers for Y13 students, and Jess Vickery for Y11 students. All of our email addresses are available on the College website.

### **5. COVID-19 Cases**

I'm glad to be able to report we have had no further confirmed cases of COVID-19 this week. Whilst we have to date only had 5 cases since the start of the school year, we would remind parents and carers that we are aware of the rise in infection rates locally, and are maintaining strict adherence with our control measures and risk assessment to prevent infection wherever possible and deal with it safely when it does occur.

Finally, it was great to answer questions and gain feedback at yesterday's online parent and carer Q and A. I look to seeing more of you again on 26 November 4pm-5pm, with the meeting link sent out that day as usual.

Thank you again for your continuing support of your young person's education.  
Yours sincerely,

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alan Salt', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Alan Salt  
**Principal**