

COVID-19 update – Final reminder on the wider reopening of schools

Years 7,8 and 9

Dear parents and carers,

This message includes information on:

- Current timetables and first day mentoring.
- Timings of the school day.
- Use of a variety of entrance and exit points across the campus.
- Use of face coverings.
- Availability of regular testing for households of secondary school-aged children.
- Uniform expectations.
- Transport to and from school.

We write, as promised in Mr Watson's message last Friday, to provide final logistical details in advance of your child's return to school on Friday.

Yesterday, we forwarded your child's current school timetable, which I hope you received and have been able to share with them. A paper copy of this timetable will be shared with your child in extended mentoring, which will take place during Periods 1 and 2 on Friday. Also, during this extended mentoring period, key staff will take the opportunity to welcome our students back, remind them of our expectations and explain COVID adaptations, which continue to be in place around the school. There will also be an opportunity for your child to reconnect with their friends and share their recent experiences, if they wish to do so. We feel it is important to acknowledge the events of the lockdown, allowing our students to reflect in an appropriate setting and then focus on their short and longer term aims as we move forward together. After extended mentoring, your child's timetabled lessons will resume at 11:20am with Period 3.

The timings of our school day remain unchanged and we expect your child to be present in school for the start of mentoring at 8:45am. We understand that many of our students may be brought to school and may arrive early. If your child arrives before 8:30am please ask them to go to the Main Hall where designated year group spaces have been provided. This will give them a warm and dry space in which to wait before mentoring. If your child arrives in school after 8:30am they should go straight to their mentoring room, where their mentor will be waiting.

Our colleagues in the Community Safety Unit of Kent Police have asked us to remind parents of the importance of children following current COVID guidance on their journey to and from school. Please encourage your child to make their way straight to and from school at the beginning and end of the school day, and avoid meeting socially with their peers in public places.

In order to mitigate unnecessary congestion across the campus, we would like to encourage our students to use a variety of points to enter and exit the school. In the morning, students can enter through the Student Reception door, through the Performing Arts entrance, or the gate by the Sixth Form, Enterprise and Employability College. At the end of the day, at 3:00pm, senior staff will direct students from different buildings to use all these locations to exit the school and alleviate congestion. In addition, we will continue to operate our split break and lunchtime to enable all students to access the Main Hall for refreshments at phased entry times. These reminders will also be shared with all our students on Friday morning.

Along with our reminders about hygiene, sanitising, one-way systems and social distancing requirements, we will inform our students of the Government's amended recommendations on the use of face coverings. As you may recall from our previous message, the Government now recommends that in addition to ***'moving around the premises, outside of classrooms, such as in corridors and communal areas, where***

social distancing cannot easily be maintained', face coverings should also be worn ***'in classrooms or during activities, unless social distancing can be maintained'***. Whilst we have a small stock of disposable masks available in school, please endeavour to send your child to school with their own reusable face covering each day. If your child is exempt from wearing a face covering, please ensure you have contacted their Support Manager so that we can prepare their exemption pass. We will then ensure staff are aware of all those who are exempt.

Another of the Government's key strategies surrounding the wider reopening of schools is access for families to Rapid Lateral Flow Testing. We are currently undertaking in-school testing across Years 7 to 14 with those who have given their consent. To all those who have taken part in this testing process, we are grateful for your patience and positivity during this unusual procedure.

In addition to the testing of our student population, from 1st March 2021, if you're a member of a household, childcare bubble, or support bubble of a student, you can also access a twice-weekly test. If you would like further information about this facility please visit the appropriate section of the Government's website by following this link: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/rapid-lateral-flow-testing-for-households-and-bubbles-of-school-pupils-and-staff>

In summary, you are able to access this testing:

- through your employer if they offer testing to employees.
- at a local test site.
- by collecting a home test kit from a test site.
- by ordering a home test kit online.

Anyone aged 18 or over can collect the tests from a local collection point which, in Canterbury, are: Canterbury Christ Church University - Car Park Gate 6 North Holmes Road and University of Kent - Rutherford Car Park. Most collection points are open from 1.30pm to 7pm and you can check online if the location is open or busy before you go. You do not need to make an appointment.

Many thanks to those of you who have contacted us regarding support with providing school uniform or PE kit items. We will continue to do all we can to help our families and look forward to seeing our students in their full uniform from Friday. If you have not yet contacted us and feel that you may require additional support regarding uniform, please contact your child's Support Manager to discuss the situation.

Finally, we have been informed by Stagecoach bus company that they are increasing their services around the district to enable students to travel to and from school. The dedicated school buses, which leave from site at the end of the day, have been reinstated, so your child will be able to use these, as normal, upon their return. If you require additional information about a particular route, please visit the Latest Timetables page on the Stagecoach website <https://www.stagecoachbus.com/promos-and-offers/national/covid-temporary-timetables> for more information.

Apologies, once again, for the length of this message, but we felt it was important to provide this full range of detail in advance of your child's return. We look forward to seeing them with us from Friday!

Yours faithfully,

Angela Banbery
Head of Middle School

James Brooke
Head of Senior School