



Friday 9th July 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

RE: Weekly Update

Now that we broadly know the guidelines for schools we can plan with more certainty and therefore today's letter is a little longer than usual. We do know that schools will look a lot more like normal from September and I'm sure that this will be positive for the experience of our young people. This next phase is being described as 'learning to live with Covid-19' and so we will need to be alert to the situation and continue to have control measures in place. To help make this letter more useful, I've divided it into two parts, to separate out announcements for this term and the new school year.

PART A – Notices for the Summer Term / Summer Holiday

Covid-19

Testing is identifying cases in the community so please continue to do twice weekly home testing. Report results to the NHS [here](#) (and ensure that you inform us of a positive result).

Any student with symptoms (new persistent cough, high temperature, loss of sense of smell or taste, additional symptoms could include headache, sore throat or runny nose) must self-isolate (along with all members of the household) until a negative PCR test is secured. If your child has social contact with someone who tests positive outside of school please let us know and keep your child in isolation.

Be vigilant and exercise caution when deciding to send your children to school should they be showing signs of illness.

End of Term Arrangements

As I advised in my weekly update from two weeks back, please be aware that term finishes at 12.20pm on Tuesday 20th July. School buses have been rearranged for this time and students who use other forms of transport (including public buses) will need to make alternative arrangements.

As a thank you to the students for the way they have coped with such a challenging year, the final half-day will also be a non-uniform day. There will be no collection for this non-uniform day, it is a good will gesture for the students.

GCSEPod

GCSEPod are hosting an exciting and inspiring free programme designed to support you and your child with learning this summer. From July 26th and over the course of 3 weeks, students and parents are invited to participate in engaging and interactive webinars, and gain access to interviews with subject specialists, resources, task sheets, podcasts and more.



Any student or parent from The Emmbrook can take part but they must register at www.gcsepod.com/summerpod to get involved. Once you have registered you will be sent an email with all the details of each event and how to attend.

PART B – Notices for September

Please be aware that for the remainder of the term the Covid-19 guidelines for schools are unchanged. Therefore all measures currently in place will stay until the new term in September. All of the changes below will come into force for the new academic year.

Control Measures

Under the new guidance maintaining good personal hygiene (e.g. frequent handwashing and “catch it, bin it, kill it”), enhanced school cleaning and good ventilation remain important measures for controlling the spread of the virus. Our risk assessments will be updated for September to reflect the new guidance.

No Bubbles

The most significant change is the end of year group bubbles. From September schools will not be required to undertake contact tracing in the event of a case of Covid-19 and so we will no longer ask groups of students to self-isolate if they have been in close contact with a positive case. In September, any student who displays Covid-19 symptoms must not attend school.

Face Coverings

Face coverings will not be required in schools this September (nor will they be required for school buses). They will remain an option for individuals who wish to continue using them.

School Uniform

Students are expected to wear full school uniform on return in September. The PE changing facilities will become re-available, so students can change into PE kit in school, meaning students should arrive to school properly attired. Please support the school’s uniform policy and be reminded that uniform violations will lead to sanctions. Your child’s form tutor or Year Leader can assist you with any questions or concerns you may have in this regard. See attached reminder of the uniform requirement.

Asymptomatic Testing in September

The guidance requires schools to offer testing at the beginning of the new term as students return to school. Next week’s update will explain how we intend to facilitate testing. I would like to give advanced warning now that this may require students to attend school briefly ahead of their first day to have a test.



Parents' Evenings

Thank you to all parents who contributed to the recent end of year survey, it will be really useful in helping shape decisions for the future. One aspect of the survey that came back very strongly was the move to online parents' evenings this year. Given the popularity with parents and staff these will be retained online for 2021/22.

Split Breaks

Another positive from the survey was the move to split breaks. One of the most significant benefits is that we have sufficient space for students to eat comfortably in the hall and no longer have need for students to eat on the floor or in corridors which was, frankly, always unsatisfactory. Without the need to keep bubbles apart, students will be permitted to purchase food from the canteen at break and lunch.

Many other aspects of school life, such as extra-curricular clubs, trips, School Council, etc., will be able to resume in September.

An important caveat within the guidance is that in cooperation with public health experts additional control measures could be introduced in response to a local outbreak. As with all things, we would keep you informed of any such developments if they were required.

Next week is the final full week of term and we are looking forward to acknowledging the students' achievements through celebration assemblies and awards. I have really been enjoying the musical showcases being posted on our Facebook page and I am excited to see those continue – what a talented group of students!

Best wishes,

Nick McSweeney
Headteacher