



Hanley Castle High School

and Sixth Form Centre

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Headteacher: Mrs Lindsey Cooke

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Dear Parent / Guardian

I hope that this letter finds you and your family well.

In July I wrote to you to share with you our plans for the new school term in September. These plans have now been finalised.

I attach a separate document which sets out full details, but I think that it is worth highlighting a number of key measures:

- All students will belong to a bubble consisting of the students with whom they share a tutor group and their lessons. On average, this will give a bubble of around 100 students (the Government maximum is 240).
- There will, however, be times when students will come into contact with students from outside their bubble – on the journey to and from school, at break and lunch time and on the corridors between lessons.
- As some of these contacts will take place in an enclosed space, for example on our narrow corridors, students will be required to wear masks when moving between lessons.
- Every student will therefore need to bring to school every day their own personal supply of hand sanitiser, a mask and a plastic bag in which to store the mask.
- Students will be taught the '**SMS Protocol**' – Sanitise / Mask / Sanitise. This protocol will ensure that they put on and take off their masks safely (a mask can only be effective if it is used and stored correctly).
- Desks will be disinfected at the end of each lesson, and additional cleaning will take place around the school throughout the school day.
- School buses are another enclosed space where children will come into contact with students from outside their bubble. Masks are mandatory on public buses but, at time of writing, not mandatory on school buses. **However, we strongly advise their use on school buses also. Seats will be colour coded for different year groups, but all students will be sitting close to each other during their journey and will mix when getting on and off the bus. We therefore strongly recommend the use of a face mask for the entire journey, as well as sanitising hands when getting on and off the bus.**

Obviously, hand sanitising and wearing masks for travel and as part of the school day will be a major change, but we hope that it will rapidly become second nature. A guidance video is under production and will be shared with parents and students in due course.

The SMS Protocol is just one of a whole host of new hygiene measures designed to protect the school community. There will, of course, be other changes:

- At 8.30 am, or on arrival in school, students must proceed directly to their registration rooms.
- Masks must be put on before entry to the school buildings, and remain on until students are seated in their registration room and instructed to follow the SMS Protocol by their teacher.



- Masks will not be worn during lessons – only as students move around the school.
- To maintain the integrity of bubbles, the library will no longer be available before or after school, or during breaktimes.
- The school day has been altered to include two breaks of equal length. Students (apart from Year 11 student leaders and sixth form) will spend these breaks out of doors in zoned areas unless the weather is extreme. Both hot and cold food will be served in each zone.
- All students will therefore need warm, waterproof outdoor clothing.
- Students will need to wear their PE kit into school on days when they have PE lessons (but there will be no practical PE lessons on the first day of the new school year, so normal uniform can be worn).

The current situation means that it is not currently possible to hold face-to-face parents' evenings or parent information evenings. We are looking at using technology to ensure that the important personal contact with parents is not lost, as well as more frequent on-line reporting to ensure that parents remain well-informed about their children's progress.

The necessity to continue social distancing will mean that we cannot hold the annual 'Celebration of Achievement' evening in September in the traditional way. However, we will ensure that our hardest working students receive the recognition and rewards they so thoroughly deserve.

Please read the attached document carefully, and share and discuss it with your child. We hope that the new arrangements will be temporary, but we will continue with them until it is safe to return to normal.

Thankfully, the number of Covid cases in Worcestershire is now very low indeed. Community transmission is minimal and there have been no Covid-related deaths in the county for a number of weeks.

My staff and I are looking forward very much to welcoming students back to school safely on Friday 4th September, with our new Year 7 and Year 12 cohorts joining us a day earlier on Thursday 3rd September for induction.

My very best wishes to you all



Lindsey Cooke
Headteacher

