



11 November 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

I hope you had a good half term break despite the poor weather. We are looking forward to another positive half term in the lead up to Christmas.

I would like to take this opportunity to remind you that there is a staff training day on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> November, which has a strong focus on our curriculum and remote learning. To help students access our relevant online systems we have set up a portal link which can be found on our website home page here <https://portal.helston.cornwall.sch.uk/>.

I am sure you are aware that the Government continues to provide schools with updated and revised national Covid-19 guidelines, which we are required to follow. In order to keep you fully informed, we intend to send out regular communications and we will continue to update our website with pertinent information.

With the latest Government restrictions in place, it has been necessary to review our risk assessment and I would like to inform you of some updates.

### 1. Face coverings

Face coverings are now compulsory in communal areas in schools under the latest national guidelines. Fortunately, we adopted this protocol at the beginning of this academic year but we want to enhance our approach to this safety measure. The only times that students should remove their face covering indoors are when they are at their desk in class and when they are sitting down eating and drinking in one of the designated eating areas in College. As soon as students have finished eating and drinking they must put their face covering on even if they are still seated.

In addition it is extremely important that students wear their face covering when travelling on school buses and public transport.

It would be helpful if you could remind your child to carry a face covering at all times.

### 2. Clinically Extremely Vulnerable students and staff

The Government believes that there is a very low risk of children becoming very unwell from coronavirus (COVID-19), even for children with existing health conditions. Parents and carers should speak to their child's GP or specialist clinician if they have not already done so, to understand whether their child should still be classed as clinically extremely vulnerable.

Those children whose doctors have confirmed they are still clinically extremely vulnerable are advised not to attend education whilst the national lockdown is in place. The College will make appropriate arrangements to enable them to continue their education at home.

Children who live with someone who is clinically extremely vulnerable, but who are not clinically extremely vulnerable themselves, should still attend education.

A small number of staff have been affected by the recent changes and have been instructed to shield by the Department of Health and Social Care. We have supply cover in place and are making additional arrangements for teachers to be able to communicate with classes and students via the various Google platforms.

### **3. Timings of the school day**

For the rest of this half term we have slightly amended the school day for certain year groups. Years 9 and 10 are no longer in rotation and are following a set pattern each week, corresponding to the Blue week on the original diagram. This change should eliminate lateness to lessons and minimise congestion in corridors at key transition times.

### **4. After school clubs**

In line with the latest guidance we will not be running sports clubs as previously planned. We are, however, allowed to provide academic support after school and we will be putting plans in place to start this once the Year 11 Mock Exams are complete.

### **5. Ventilation in school buildings**

At the end of October, the Government guidance placed a greater emphasis on the importance of natural ventilation in classrooms and school buildings. This is to reduce the spread of Covid-19 via aerosol transmission. This safety measure has been in place at the College from the outset, but it is now getting colder as we progress towards winter.

To balance the need for increased ventilation while maintaining a comfortable temperature, the following measures will be used as appropriate:

- opening high level windows in preference to low level to reduce draughts
- increasing the ventilation while spaces are unoccupied (e.g. between classes, during break and lunch, when a room is unused)
- rearranging furniture where possible to avoid direct drafts
- providing flexibility to allow additional, suitable indoor clothing.

During cold days we recommend that students wear a base layer under their uniform and a plain black or navy jumper (no hoodies, logos or offensive slogans). Coats may be worn in classes at the teachers' discretion if it is particularly cold, but this is not an ideal solution if it is a wet day. The guidance for PE kit remains the same as before.

### **6. Parents and Carers visiting the College**

Unfortunately, as we are currently not allowed to have parent/carer meetings on site these will be carried out via telephone or some form of virtual meeting. We are investing in enhanced features to our parent evening booking system to be able to carry out parent/teacher meetings face-to-face online. We will trial this at the Post 16 parent evening in December and then roll it out to other evenings and events if successful.

### **7. Examinations**

The Government are fully committed to running A-level and GCSE examinations next year. At present there is no clear Plan B. There is much dialogue going on at a national level, but nothing concrete has been proposed by Ofqual or the Government. College assessments should therefore be taken very seriously in case we end up in a similar position to last year whereby students are given a final qualification based on assessments completed throughout the year.

**8. Students leaving the College site at the end of the day**

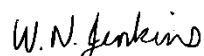
We have received several complaints from the general public recently about students walking home in large groups and showing little respect to other pedestrians and road users. We would be grateful if you would reinforce with your child the need for social distancing and responsible behaviour when out in the local community, along with appropriate road safety awareness.

**9. Covid-19 App**

The College recommends that Post 16 students download the NHS Covid-19 App. Students should inform a member of staff if they receive a notification from the app that they have been in contact with a positive case. To support this, the notification itself will advise them that if they are under the age of 18, they should show the message to a trusted adult and self-isolate.

I appreciate you taking the time to read this letter carefully. It is important that we work together to provide the best environment for students and their learning at this very difficult time. I will continue to monitor the Government guidance very closely and will update you again should any major changes occur in the future.

Yours sincerely



**Mr WN Jenkins**  
**Headteacher**