



St John Fisher Catholic High School

EDUCATING FOR LIFE

Hookstone Drive, Harrogate, HG2 8PT

Head Teacher: Mr S Mort B.A. (Hons), NPQH

Telephone: (01423) 887254 Website: www.sjfchs.org.uk Email: office@sjfchs.org.uk

3rd March 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

Thank you for your continued exceptional support for the school community during these unprecedented and increasingly challenging times.

During the next two weeks we will be simultaneously undertaking mass Asymptomatic testing, reintroducing face to face learning, providing remote learning for students who are awaiting their designated testing day and continuing to accommodate the children of key workers. Therefore, your continued patience and understanding (for a few more days) is much appreciated.

I know that with the density of Government announcements and conflicting media coverage, there is a risk of feeling overwhelmed by what is required to safely welcome back all our students and staff. I shall therefore attempt to highlight the key points below.

For information, the Government guidance can be found on the DfE website.

Preparing for a full return to school

We have been preparing to safely welcome back all our students and staff. Our preparations have entailed updating our risk assessments and establishing an Asymptomatic Testing Centre on the school site. The control measures which we have implemented to minimise the risk of transmission of coronavirus (COVID – 19) adhere to the latest DfE guidance 'Schools coronavirus (COVID – 19) operational guidance' which was published in February 2021.

We will ensure that all students and staff are given reminders of how we can return safely and minimise the risk of transmission through adopting the appropriate control measures. Many of the control measures remain in place from the Autumn Term 2020, and therefore will be familiar to students, staff, parents, and carers. These include maintaining year group bubbles, the use of a one-way system around the school building, designated year group zones and the use of safeguarding lanyards, face coverings and hand sanitiser units.

Parents/carers can access the latest school risk assessment on the COVID -19 section of our website.

Coronavirus Symptoms

Students must not attend school if they, or anyone in their household, have any of the following symptoms or have tested positive in the last 10 days:

- new persistent cough
- shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- fever or chills
- new loss of taste or smell.





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Infection Control Measures

Students must follow the coronavirus (COVID-19) public health guidance and, for example, should not return to school if they, or anyone in their household(s) or support bubble, have symptoms of coronavirus (Covid-19), if they have been in close contact with anyone who has tested positive, or if they have received a positive test result themselves.

If your child is displaying Coronavirus (COVID -19) symptoms, you must inform school and keep your child at home for 10 days. Other members of the household should self-isolate for 10 days from when your child first became ill. Parents/carers should seek a test (within 3-5 days of symptoms appearing), engage with the NHS Test and Trace process and inform the school of the result of a test.

If your child tests positive, they should follow the 'stay at home: guidance for households with a confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection' and must continue to self-isolate for at least 10 days from the onset of their symptoms. The 10-day period starts from the day when your child first became ill. If they still have a high temperature, they should keep self-isolating until their temperature returns to normal. Other members of their household should continue self-isolating for the full 10 days.

In the event of a positive case, please inform the school via covid@sjfchs.org.uk

If your child tests negative, feels well and no longer has COVID-19 systems, they can return to school. However, we will require proof of a negative test result before your child returns to school. If your child tests negative but still feels unwell, they could still have another virus (such as a cold or flu) in which case it is still best for them to self-isolate and not return to school until they are better.

Mass Asymptomatic Testing on the school site.

Rapid testing using Lateral Flow Devices will support the return to face-to -face education by helping to identify people who are infectious but do not have any coronavirus symptoms. Schools are expected to offer 3 tests (per student) scheduled three to five days apart from Monday 8th March.

To manage the number of students passing through the test site at any one time, the Government have provided school's with the flexibility to organize for a phased return to face to face learning from Monday 8th March. In doing so school's must prioritise vulnerable children, children of critical workers, and year groups 10 to 13.

This is a significant and unprecedented logistical operation, and our testing facility will be running continuously and at full capacity. This is going to be an intense period, as we conduct around 4500 tests within a tight period. To get ahead of ourselves, and to road test undertaking such a mass programme, we are going to start testing from Thursday 4th March. We are grateful to the school staff who will be supporting our students in taking the tests, alongside their normal duties.





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The car park area at the front of school will be left clear for parents to park and wait for students to be tested. There will be appropriate signage and instructions on the day to facilitate a smooth and efficient process.

To maintain the year group bubbles, students can only be tested at the same time as their year group peers. Therefore, it is important that students keep to their scheduled testing time, as we are unable to arrange alternatives.

Students will leave site as soon as they have taken the test. We will inform parents/carers of a positive test result. Students with a positive test result will need to self-isolate in line with the guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection.

A short briefing video relating to the Lateral Flow Device will be made available on the COVID-19 section of the school website. We encourage your child to view this prior to taking a test.

Home Testing

Following the completion of the 3 on-site tests, students will be provided with LFD tests. The government have stated that these tests will be made available from Monday 15th March.

Face coverings

Face coverings continue to be compulsory for all students and staff in all indoor communal areas and corridors where it is difficult to maintain social distancing. In addition, the Government now expect all students to wear face coverings in classrooms except when a two - metre distance can be maintained, or for certain activities such as PE.

Please ensure that your child carries a supply of face coverings with them during the school day. Some persons are exempt from wearing face coverings. If this applies to your child, please inform us via office@sjfchs.org.uk and we will ensure they receive a badge to wear on their lanyard/lapel which will enable staff to identify students who are exempt.

The requirement that students wear face coverings in classrooms will be in place for the 3 week period from the Monday 8th March until the Easter holidays and will then be reviewed by the Government.

In line with Government guidance, it is also now compulsory for all students to wear a face covering on both public and dedicated school transport.

Uniform Policy and Expectations

All students will be expected to be in full school uniform. The Governors expect that, in choosing St John Fisher, parents and carers will demonstrate that they fully support our uniform policy by ensuring their child conforms with the student dress code.





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We particularly seek parents/carers support in ensuring students wear formal black shoes. Trainers, including black trainers e.g., Nike Air Force One, are not permitted.

If there is an exceptional and/or unavoidable reason why your child is not in full uniform, you should provide a note in their student planner (or contact Student Services by 8.20 a.m.) explaining the circumstances. Your child's Head of Year will contact you and a deadline will be agreed, by which time we will expect the uniform issue to have been addressed.

We recognise that some families will have experienced financial difficulties during lockdown which may make the purchasing of a new item of school uniform a challenge. If this is the case, please contact your child's Head of Year to confidentially discuss how we can best support you. Heads of Year can be contacted via e-mail at office@sjfchs.org.uk

Safeguarding Lanyards

The year group designated lanyard will continue to constitute a compulsory part of the school uniform. Students in years 7-11 will be provided with a new lanyard on their first day back in March. This will enable staff to quickly identify which year group 'bubble' and which zone the student belongs to.

Sixth form students will also be provided with a new lanyard which should be collected from the Sixth form office on the morning of their designated return to school day.

Physical Education Uniform

On days that students have a timetabled physical education or dance lesson, they must wear their full P.E. kit and blazer. Students are permitted to wear black or blue track suit pants or SJF leggings.

Equipment

Students should limit the amount of equipment they bring into school to that required for the current day. Students must bring their planner and their own stationery to school every day. We encourage students to adhere to the 'Catch it, Bin it, always Kill it' principle. Therefore, it would be beneficial for students to carry their own packet of tissues and a pocket size bottle of hand sanitiser.

The school will continue to provide specialist equipment in practical subjects; however, students will not be permitted to share equipment or resources with other students. As physical contact between students is not permitted, outdoor games (during break and lunch) will not be allowed. Therefore, personal sports equipment e.g., a football, should not be brought into school.

Students are permitted to bring a mobile phone, but this (along with any other electronic device) must be switched off and out of site whilst on the school premises.





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Drop off and pick -up arrangements.

We regret that parents/carers are not permitted access to the school site during this time. The only exception will be parents/carers of students with a physical disability and vulnerable students who access Local Authority school transport.

To avoid congestion outside the school site, and out of courtesy to residents, parents/carers are asked to continue to adopt a park and stride approach by dropping off/picking up their child away from the school site.

Catering provision

The school kitchen will fully reopen to provide lunch for all students. Alternatively, students can bring their own healthy packed lunch. Sixth Form students will be able to purchase food and drink both at lunch time, and other times of the day, as normal. Key worker children who are currently accessing the school site should continue to bring their own packed lunch until their designated full return to school date.

We regret that the breakfast club will continue to be closed and there will be no provision for students to purchase food or drinks from the dining hall during morning break. Therefore, students are encouraged to bring their own healthy snack and bottled water.

Sixth Form Provision

Wherever possible, Sixth Form students should attend school for lessons only and undertake private study at home. Where this is not possible, Sixth Form students should keep to their year group bubbles and use the following designated areas.

Year 12 – Marquee, Lower School dining room and designated area of the Library.

Year 13 - 6th Forming Dining Hall, T2 and designated area of the Library.

Registration and RSG lessons will continue to be postponed until future notice.

Sixth Form Refurbishment

We are currently refurbishing some parts of the ground floor of the main school building, including creating a new designated sixth form study area. Consequently, the Sixth Form toilets will be out of use until after Easter. Therefore, Sixth Form students should use the Keelan Centre toilets.

Medical room

The school medical room will operate as normal to ensure provision for children who are feeling unwell or require first aid during the school day. Where we suspect a student has Covid19 symptoms, the student will be isolated, and parents/carers or the emergency contact will be required to collect them from school asap - and certainly within 60 minutes from receiving a telephone call.





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If your contact details (including your emergency contact) have recently changed, please contact the school via office@sjfchs.org.uk to make sure your details are up to date.

Communication with staff

Regrettably, the risk assessment dictates that parents/carers and visitors are still unable to access the school buildings. Therefore, we would ask that you follow the normal protocol for contacting school via e-mail office@sjfchs.org.uk or a telephone call on 01423 887254.

Staff Reinduction Day Friday 5th March

To familiarise our staff with the system of controls which we have implemented on the school site, and to prepare for the return to full -time face to face learning, all staff are participating in a reinduction day on Friday 5th March.

Digital Detox Day Friday 5th March

In consideration of the hundreds of hours that our students have spent in front of a screen during the period of remote learning, we are dedicating Friday 5th March to a digital detox day for years 7 -11. On this day, our students will be encouraged to engage with a range of activities to support their mental health and well-being. Heads of Year will provide further information via their Teams year group channels.

Please note that Sixth Form students will follow their normal timetable on this day.

Postponement of Staff Training Day on Wednesday 17th March.

To avoid any further unnecessary disruption to learning, the staff training day, which was scheduled for Wednesday 17th March, has been postponed.

Yours sincerely

Mr S Mort
Headteacher

