

23 October 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

Covid weekly update

This has been a half term like no other that I have known.

The “when, not if”, that we had to plan for happened, and we joined the increasingly long list of schools reporting a positive Covid 19 case. As you will know we had to close a small bubble in Year 8 and some staff additionally had to be sent home for precautionary reasons. I would like to thank the parents and carers who we had to contact for their supportive response to this decision. I assure you that, our internal track and trace systems have been properly tested, and allowed us to act extremely quickly to contain the impact of the confirmed cases. All areas where there was the slightest chance of the virus having been passed, have been deep cleaned. Thankfully, we have had no further cases outside those initial cases on Friday and Monday.

We have of course reviewed our risk assessment in the light of the developments. We are now issuing masks to all students who do not remember to bring their own, and have issued sunflower pins to those who should not wear one. We are constantly promoting the importance of hands- space – face, and even more the commitment to keeping us all safe by playing our own part. I am pleased to be able to report that the response of the vast majority of students is now very positive. The vast majority are wearing masks inside the building, without having to be reminded and self-regulating, in terms of maintaining personal space.

We know we could not do this without your support – Thank you.

On other matters, we really do need the permission slips for our transition to the cashless system. These need to be in on Monday please. As you know this will speed up access to the dining room and give parents a clearer sense of how money is being spent. I should have made clear in the letter that the scanners will be cleaned between each child touching the device as part of the Covid 19 measures.

A positive note to end – yesterday I attended the formal opening of the new skate park. This was the fruition of three years of hard work to design, raise funds and project manage the work. It has been so rewarding to see the group of students grow in confidence and develop leadership qualities. I am also delighted to see how our school is making such significant contributions to our wider community, after the successes of “Surprise NHS Shoeboxes”, and the “Yohey Befriender” programme.

I want to thank the Valley Way Fish and Chip shop, who have made the incredibly kind and generous offer, to give free lunches to our students in half term.

It has been a challenging half term. We are working incredibly hard to deliver our “recovery curriculum” and help year 11 prepare for the exams within the guidance, and to ensure the safety of all the students. Thank you again for all your support in these difficult times.

Above all look after yourselves and keep safe.

Nick Froy  
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Newmarket Academy and Sybil Andrews Academy