

Principal: Dr Katharine Vincent

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Friday 16th October 2020

Dear parent/carer,

As we approach the October half term break, I am writing with some updates about the school and about the current situation.

Introduction of Tier 2 restrictions

You will be aware that the government have introduced some additional measures in the local area, owing to the rise in Coronavirus cases within London. We would like to encourage all families to ensure that they are following the guidelines that are in place to prevent the spread of the virus and to protect the most vulnerable within our community.

Positive Covid-19 cases within the school community

The small number of positive cases identified within the school have been dealt with quickly and effectively, in accordance with the advice given to the school by Public Health England and the relevant authorities. At present, a small number of students in Year 13 are at home self-isolating owing to contact with a positive case. Students are being taught online while they are isolating and teachers are setting work to ensure that students do not fall behind.

Asking students to self-isolate is a precaution taken to help control the spread of the virus. It does not mean students have definitely been exposed to the virus and it does not mean any other household members need to self-isolate. Thank you for supporting students while they are self-isolating and for supporting the school in our efforts to ensure that any possible risk to others is minimised.

Winter clothing

It is necessary for us to keep doors and windows within the school building open, to keep air flowing in order to help prevent the spread of the virus. As a result, it is likely that the school building will be colder than usual this winter. We are therefore relaxing our usual school uniform and dress code rules as follows:

- All students are allowed to wear coats inside the building, including inside classrooms.
- If Year 10 and Year 11 students are wearing coats, they must wear them over their blazers.
- If Sixth Form students are wearing coats, they must wear them over their shirts/sweaters/dresses.
- Students must not have the hoods of their coats up at any time within the school building and they must not wear hoodies, hats or caps within school.

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Parents are reminded that students in Year 10 and Year 11 may wear a grey v-neck jumper under their blazer. They must not wear hoodies or other non-school jumpers, either under or over their blazers. If any families are finding it difficult to provide appropriate warm winter clothing, please speak to the school about this so that we can support you.

Year 12 parents' evening

Following the success of our remote Year 10 parents' evening, we will also be holding Year 12 parents' evening over the telephone. All parents of Year 12 students will receive a data report through the post; this will be followed by a phone-call to the parents of any students where there are particular concerns about a student's attendance, punctuality, effort, achievement or other issues. Thank you in advance to Year 12 parents for taking the time to speak on the phone with teachers during this time.

Attendance at school

We understand that you be feeling anxious about the potential risk of infection to yourselves or vulnerable family members. The school is a safe environment and all students are expected to attend school every day, unless they are seriously unwell or are required to self-isolate. You will be notified if there are any positive Covid-19 cases within the school community and if there are any students who need to self-isolate as a result of potential close contact with a case. All other students are required to attend school as normal.

October half term

Since the Mulberry Schools Trust has now moved to a model of a two-week October half term break, the dates for October half term are as follows:

- **Thursday 22nd October** – last day of half term for students
- **Friday 23rd October** - school closed to students owing to staff training
- **w/c Monday 26th October** - school closed to students for half term break
- **w/c Monday 2nd November** - Intervention week for Y11 and Y13; school closed to Y10 and 12

Mock exams

Mock exams will take place during November for all students in Year 11 and Year 13. Please refer to the separate letter about mock exams which has been sent out by Ms Christofides for further guidance about this. Year 11 and Year 13 students are strongly encouraged to use the half term break to revise.

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House leadership roles

As part of the school's House system, students have the opportunity to apply for leadership roles within the student Houses, including the role of House Captain. The application deadline is Thursday 22nd October and we would like to encourage all students to consider applying for these important leadership roles.

Safety measures

The school is following all government guidance and has a range of safety measures in place to ensure that the risk of infection is minimised. This includes:

- Face-masks must be worn by all students and staff in all circulation spaces of the school at all times.
- Students and staff must remain 2 metres apart from each other where possible and, where this is not possible, they must remain at least 1 metre apart at all times.
- There is hand sanitiser available all over the school.
- Students and staff are required to regularly wash and sanitise their hands.
- The school is teaching all subjects and following the normal curriculum.
- Students are taught with their own zones with separate classrooms, desk, chairs and toilets.

Any students who are exempt from wearing a mask for medical or other reasons should speak to a member of staff so that this can be properly recorded.

STEM Academy launch

I am excited to be able to let you know that the Trust is launching a new initiative aimed at supporting students who wish to progress into future study or careers within STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths). Further information about this STEM Academy will be sent to you shortly and will be given out to students before October half term.

Many thanks for your continued support during this time.

Yours sincerely,



Dr K Vincent
Principal

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