



Principal: Dr Katharine Vincent

Friday 10th September 2021

Dear parents and carers,

It has been wonderful to welcome back our returning students this week, and also to welcome so many lovely students into Year 10 and Year 12. Students have settled into lessons extremely well and we are impressed by the extent to which Year 11 students have returned to school in a calm and focused way, ready for the important year ahead as they prepare for their final examinations next summer.

My letter this week focuses predominantly on the school's Covid-19 measures, to ensure all families are aware of the way in which the school is implementing government guidance this term.

COVID-19 Control Measures

We are aware that COVID is still amongst us and, in this context, safeguarding our school and community remains a priority. Although most of the additional safety measures put into place during the pandemic have now been removed, we will continue to emphasise the importance of good hygiene, ventilation and social distancing.

The school has the following control measures in place:

- Promoting good hygiene for everyone.
- Maintaining appropriate cleaning regimes.
- Keeping occupied spaces well ventilated.
- Following public health advice on testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases of COVID-19.
- Continuing with bi-weekly asymptomatic tests. This will be reviewed by the government later in the term.

Promoting good personal hygiene

Good personal hygiene continues to play a fundamental role in reducing the transmission of the virus. We will continue to encourage good COVID hygiene for every one by:

- Continuing to promote frequent hand washing with soap and water or hand sanitiser
- Promoting good respiratory hygiene -the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach
- Using personal protective equipment (PPE) where appropriate
- Ensuring classrooms and communal areas are well ventilated
- Increase cleaning in key areas of the school and following any confirmed COVID cases.
- Classrooms to have a wipe down box of cleaning equipment (including antibacterial wipes, sanitising spray, cloths and gloves) areas for staff to use.

Dealing with possible or confirmed cases of COVID 19

Students and staff should not come into school if they have symptoms of COVID 19 or if they have had a positive test result. Anyone who has symptoms is advised to take a PCR test and to self-isolate until they have the results. If the



Principal: Dr Katharine Vincent

result is negative, they can return to school when they feel well enough. If the result is positive, they will need to self-isolate for 10 days, following the government guidelines.

If anyone develops COVID-19 symptoms while in school, they will be sent home immediately, recommended to take a PCR test and to self-isolate until they receive the results. Students do not need to self-isolate if they live in the same household as someone with COVID-19, or if they are a close contact of someone with COVID-19. Instead, they will be contacted by NHS Test and Trace and advised to take a PCR test. We would encourage all students to take a PCR test if advised to do so.

Contact tracing

Schools are no longer required to carry out contact tracing. In the event of a confirmed case at school, NHS Track and Trace will work with the staff member, student and/or parent/carer to identify close contacts.

Individuals are not required to self-isolate if they are a close contact of a positive COVID case, or if they live in a household with a COVID case, providing one of the following:

- They are under 18
- They are over 18 and fully vaccinated
- They are in an approved COVID 19 trial
- They are not able to vaccinate for medical reasons

If not required to self-isolate, an individual who is a close contact of a confirmed case will be advised to take a PCR test, but should continue to attend school in the meantime. If the result is negative, they should continue to attend school; if the result is positive, they should immediately self-isolate and notify the school.

Lateral flow tests

Staff and students are encouraged to continue to take lateral flow tests twice a week. If any student or staff member has a positive lateral flow test, they will be required to self-isolate and take a PCR test, within two days of the positive result. If the PCR test is negative then person can return to school.

Staff and students who are (or whose household members are) clinically vulnerable

Any staff members or students who were shielding as a result of being clinically vulnerable or extremely vulnerable, or living with a family member who is clinically extremely vulnerable, should attend school as normal. Staff and students in this category are encouraged to maintain social distancing measures and follow other precautions, such as regular hand-washing, wherever possible.

Ventilation

The school will continue to endeavour to ensure that all spaces have good ventilation and air flow. As part of their risk assessment, staff have been asked to open windows and doors where possible, to help ventilation and air flow, as long as it does not lead to the temperature being uncomfortably cold. As a new school, Mulberry UTC has CO₂ monitors fitted in most rooms; staff have been trained in how to use these to monitor ventilation, so they can take action to improve ventilation if the need arises.



Risk Assessment and Contingency framework

The school has updated its COVID-19 risk assessment, which will be available for parents on the school website. We have also created a contingency framework to deal with any significant outbreak of infections. This would be implemented if one of the following situations arose:

1. 5 students or staff, who are likely to have mixed closely, test positive for COVID-19 within 10-days;
2. 10% of students/staff, who are likely to have mixed closely, test positive for COVID-19 within 10-days.

Measures under the contingency framework may include: additional testing, temporarily reintroducing face coverings, limits on trips, visits and face to face events and/or the reintroduction of bubbles or zones. Any decision to implement the contingency framework and reintroduce any of these measures would not be taken lightly and would only be taken if advised by NHS or Public Health.

Update on school operations from September 2021

Start and End of the School Day

The school day starts at 8:40am for all students. Parents/carers may accompany students onto the school site but should not come into the school building. The school day finishes at 3:50pm Monday to Thursday and 2:10pm on Fridays. There will be no staggered finish time, but most Sixth Form students are allowed to leave school after the end of their last lesson of the day.

Travel to school

The school will continue to encourage staff and students to walk or cycle to school wherever possible. Any students or staff who travel to school via public transport must comply with the rules put into place by TfL, including the requirement to wear a face-mask while travelling and within stations. Secure storage for those travelling to school by bicycle is available at the side of the UTC building.

Face coverings

Face coverings are no longer required, but they may be worn by students and staff around the building or in lessons if they wish to do so. If face-masks are worn, they must be worn properly (covering the whole nose and mouth) and stored safely when they are not being worn.

Bubbles and zones

Students are no longer required to work within bubbles and the school is no longer divided into zones. All students can therefore have access to the world-class facilities offered by Mulberry UTC, including science labs, our main theatre, the film and TV studio, the care suite and the hospital ward.

Break and lunchtimes

We have returned to the usual arrangements for break and lunchtime. Food is available at break and lunchtime in The View for all students; at lunchtime, food is also available in the ground floor Café area for Sixth Form students only.



Principal: Dr Katharine Vincent

Paying for food and drink at break and lunchtime

The school operates a cashless system, with students paying for lunch by swiping their ID cards at the till. This includes those students who are eligible for free school meals. Parents/carers can add money to students' accounts using the online Parentpay system; a username and password has been sent to new families in a separate letter. Students are required to wear their ID cards at all times and must present them at the till in order to be served with their lunch.

Uniform and dress code

All students and staff are expected to adhere to the usual expectations in relation to uniform and dress code. All KS4 students are required to wear school uniform as usual and all Sixth Form students are required to wear professional dress, with usual expectations including no jeans, no trainers, no hoodies, no hats or caps, no coats within the school building and no headphones or phones to be used within the school building at any time.

Assemblies and performances

Parents will be able to attend performances, assemblies and meetings in the school where invited.

Trips and visits

A full range of trips and visits will take place during the Autumn term. We are excited about reintroducing this important aspect of school life and hope to plan many exciting trips and visits for students over the next few months. Further details will be sent to you about any trips and visits with which your child is involved.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions about any of this information. Thank you once again for all your ongoing support for the school, which is very much appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Dr K Vincent
Principal