The John Warner School

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23rd October 2020

Dear Parent(s)/Carer(s)

Re. October half term (23rd October 2020)

I am writing to give you an update on the situation at school as we reach the end of this autumn half term.

It was always likely that coming back from lockdown and partial school closure was going to be harder than moving into that position back in March. The full re-opening with restrictions and regulations in place has meant that the experience of school life for staff and students alike has been far from normal.

I have been delighted with the engagement shown by the students and commitment from the staff to make the best of our circumstances and ensure that the return to on-site provision has been widely welcomed. Attendance has been higher than the national picture and we have made great strides to not only recover the lost curriculum from earlier in the year but also to move everybody in the right direction.

Covid cases

I have kept you all informed of the positive Covid cases that we have had this half term. In total, three members of staff and five students (4 in Year 11 and 1 in Year 12) have tested positive. In each case, the school has identified possible close contacts which has resulted in further staff and students having to self-isolate. This has caused further disruption to the schooling of students in important examination years and is a far from desirable situation for the students, parents or the school.

Tiers and face coverings

You will be aware that the government have recently (12th October) introduced the three tiers as a way of addressing Covid cases at a local rather than national level.

The Borough of Broxbourne is currently Tier 1 (medium risk), although neighbouring areas (London and Essex) have gone into Tier 2 (high risk).

In response to this, the DfE have updated their guidance including advice about face coverings:

- In Tier 1 (medium risk) the school retains the discretion to require face coverings, for example in communal areas, where social distancing cannot easily be maintained. This has been most commonly applied in schools who have not been able to maintain the separation of year group bubbles as we have.
- If our area were to move into Tier 2 (high risk) or Tier 3 (very high risk), the guidance now states that face coverings *should* be worn by adults and pupils in corridors and communal areas (unless someone is exempt).
- Face coverings would not be required in classrooms at any tier

We will keep a close eye on the developing local situation and will inform you of any changes to our school's plan and approach to the wearing of face coverings.

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Face coverings will need to be worn after half term for any pupils wishing to access the amended canteen provision.

Canteen

I would like to remind you about the communication I sent around last week about changes to our school canteen provision after half term. Each year group will have access to the canteen at lunchtime (13:30-13:50) on one day per week (Monday – Year 7, Tuesday – Year 8, Wednesday – Year 10, Thursday – Year 9 and Friday – Year 11). Please remember to ensure that your child has money on their WisePay account so they are able to purchase food and drink on these days. Free school meal pupils will continue to be able to access food in the canteen everyday between 13:20 and 13:30.

Phones

You will have received a letter from Mrs Pope and Ms Thomas regarding the school's mobile phone policy. Please can I ask you to reiterate the school's approach with your child/children before they return.

Happy holiday

I hope that you and your families have a good week and that the children get some deserved rest before we return on Monday 2nd November 2020.

Thank you for your continued support.

Best wishes

Mr Jeremy Scott
Headteacher

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