

Dear students and parents

I trust this email finds you all well. Our college community have continued to respond extremely well to the various challenges of COVID and we are confident that the updated blended learning arrangements since the autumn half term break are working smoothly. When onsite students are supportive of the extra safety measures in place and we have adapted these to protect our students and staff following feedback.

As you will know from previous emails, we have unfortunately had more positive student cases of COVID in the last few weeks and staff have supported these students fully. In a few cases we have had to ask a number of other students to self-isolate due to close contact, although to a large degree the 50/50 timetable has protected us from frequent and repeated disruption, with only some of the positive cases leading to action taken. To ensure transparency and reassure all of our community, we maintain a record of any positive cases on our [college website](#).

Blended learning arrangements

As we move closer to the Christmas break, I would like to update you all on arrangements for the next half term. We have always been clear that we want to return to a sense of normality with 100% onsite learning when that is possible, although clearly this will still be with COVID-safe arrangements in place. The main challenge, in a sixth form college with over 2,000 students, is how to separate year groups of around 1,000 following the clear [government guidance](#). Like the majority of colleges in the region, we have therefore been operating blended learning.

Over the last few months, we have been planning actively to address this challenge. When students return in January, they will see a very large new canopy installed in Denne Quad which will provide a significant new area of sheltered social space. We have also adjusted our provision to allow for the Sports Hall to be fully taken over as a social area and the Duckering Hall to accommodate a catering outlet after spring half term. This is not possible sooner due to the large number of exams being run during January and daytime interviewing of prospective learners in early February.

Timetable for first spring half term

With these two extra social areas that will allow separation of year groups during the college day, we are therefore anticipating a return to full onsite delivery after the spring half term break on Monday 22nd February. We will of course provide further updates in late January to give final confirmation and details of arrangements.

Until then, during the first spring half term blended learning will continue with year groups attending in order as follows:

Dates	Attending at college	Distance learning
4/1 – 8/1	2A	1A and Transition
11/1 – 15/1	1A and Transition	2A
18/1 – 22/1	2A	1A and Transition
25/1 – 29/1	1A and Transition	2A
1/2 - 5/2	2A	1A and Transition
8/2 – 12/2	1A and Transition	2A
Spring half term break		

Mid-year exams

Our staff at Collyer's are committed to providing an outstanding education for all students. We continue to develop and adapt our teaching and learning strategies to respond to blended learning and to ensure learners are fully prepared for their assessments – both during the year and in summer 2021. Last week our Vice Principal (Curriculum), Rob Hussey, wrote to all students and parents to explain arrangements for our mid-year exams for 2A students. These exams will help students prepare for the summer as well as providing

teachers with clear, formally assessed evidence of progress during the final year. I am confident students will take reassurance in this and we will ensure they are managed in a COVID-safe way at all times.

Advice on keeping safe

The most important steps to keeping safe that all our college community should remember are:

Keep your distance	Observe the 1m+ rule.
Wear a mask	In all corridors and communal areas, both inside and outside, and as soon as you enter the college site.
Wash hands regularly	Use the hand sanitiser stations at the entrance to each building and each classroom and carry your own hand sanitiser with you at all times.
Don't come to college if you have symptoms	If you have symptoms of COVID-19 however mild, self-isolate for at least 10 days from when your symptoms started. You should arrange to have a test to see if you have COVID-19 – go to testing to arrange.

Further information on keeping safe on site and when travelling to college will be communicated regularly through several different ways, including the weekly bulletin, tutorial emails and sessions, teacher updates in lessons, signage around the estate and staff monitoring the estate each day. Please remember that once off site the regional tier system and restrictions apply and students must be aware of the latest guidance and the importance of complying with this at all times outside of college.

End of autumn term

It only remains for me to wish all students a safe and productive remainder of this autumn term. In the last week of term our 2A students are distance learning and 1A students will have lessons running onsite until Thursday 17th December at 1.20pm. Lessons on the last day of term are slightly rearranged as usual and information about this will be in the weekly bulletin and communicated via tutor period.

Wishing everyone a restful and safe Christmas break when it comes.

Kind regards

Dan Lodge
Principal