

Thursday 5th November 2020

Dear students and parents

This morning we all woke to a new national lockdown. Schools, colleges and universities all remain open and whilst the situation is clearly concerning for all of us, I would like to reassure you first and foremost that we have very robust safety arrangements onsite and that all our staff are fully committed to the education of all our learners. The confidence and resilience all of our community have shown at every stage of this pandemic will continue to guide us through the more challenging weeks ahead. Apart from some specific updates to our arrangements detailed below, Collyer's remains open as usual and students should continue to attend as they were before.

New guidance

Following the announcement of the lockdown on Saturday we received what we anticipate is [interim updated guidance](#) yesterday. A further, more detailed update is expected tomorrow and if there are any significant changes then I will write again. The main changes in the new guidance are as follows:

1. Face coverings are now mandatory in all secondary schools in social areas, corridors and around campus.
2. Students who are [Clinically Extremely Vulnerable](#) should study from home.

As you will know, as a college we already decided to mandate face coverings from the 1st of September. If any students have confirmation of being Clinically Extremely Vulnerable they should not come onsite and contact absence@collyers.ac.uk for further advice.

FAQs and Risk Assessment

Following the interim update we have already revised the FAQs which can be found on the [college website](#). We will update the Risk Assessment and publish this as soon as we have reviewed the more detailed guidance once it is released.

Positive cases

We have emailed all students, parents and staff with details of every single positive case within our community so far and this complete transparency with everyone is a very important part of our response to the pandemic. The 50/50 blended model of teaching and learning is primarily to ensure we separate year groups to comply with DfE guidance and ensure safety onsite, but a secondary benefit is clearly that it vastly reduces the risk of 'close contact' with positive cases. For a college of over 2,000 students we have had seven student cases and one staff case so far over nearly 10 weeks. A total of 18 members of our community have had to self-isolate due to close contact, but to the best of our knowledge there has been no transmission onsite.

Given the national and local infection rate trends it is likely that we will see an increase in positive cases in the coming weeks. We have decided therefore to no longer email an update on every case – instead we are recording all cases on a simple table on the [college website](#). Emails will only be sent in cases where individuals need to self-isolate. Should we ever have multiple related cases we will of course communicate with all students, staff and parents immediately.

Safety on and offsite

I would like to remind all our college community of the importance, now more than ever, of adhering to our safety arrangements onsite. Students have been brilliant in observing the new requirements but for the safety of everyone we ask that this continues. It is also worth pointing out that outside of college the broader national rules introduced during the lockdown apply. Most notably these include [not meeting socially](#).

Christmas concert

It would be lovely to end this email with an upbeat note of Christmas cheer, but for those that were looking forward to our annual event at St. Mary's I have sadly had to agree with the Vicar of Horsham Lisa Barnett that we will not be able to go ahead with the event this year. We very much hope that next Christmas will see even more attending than usual to make up for this!

And finally, I wish you all and your family and friends well. We all look forward to when times return to being simpler and safer, but in the meantime our community spirit and careful preparations will see us through the current challenges.

Kind regards

Dan Lodge
Principal