

18th June, 2021



Dear Parent/Carer

Parental Update 63

Ask most people how their week has been, and they will probably tell you it's been "busy". Ask those who work in education and they will probably give you the same answer – maybe with a choice word or two attached! But if you ask me – well, this week has been one of the busiest I can recall; and I'm sure that if you asked my colleagues to describe their last few weeks, they would need more than just one or two choice words!

I'm equally sure all our Year 11 and Year 13 students would say the same. Today is the deadline for submitting the Teacher Assessed Grades (for students taking external exams this summer) to the Exam Boards. Our students (and their families) have worked incredibly hard over the last couple of months to ensure we have the evidence necessary to determine those grades – thank you to all concerned. At the same time, the workload needed to ensure those grades are fair and accurate has been immense, so I'd also want to thank, publicly, all my colleagues for ensuring the process has gone as smoothly as it has.

What's made this week so busy, though, has been the fact that 'normal school life' has continued apace whilst all the work on Teacher Assessed Grades has been taking place behind the scenes, so to speak. We're making good progress in planning next year's timetable, for example, and it was a pleasure to meet (albeit virtually) so many Year 10 parents at the Parents' Evening on Monday. We've also had to respond to a couple of positive Coronavirus test results in our school community, and I'm sure you'd want to join me in sending all those affected (either directly or indirectly, through having to self-isolate) our best wishes at this time.

On the subject of self-isolation, I would ask for your forbearance with 'live lessons' in Teams. It is particularly challenging to deliver a lesson simultaneously online and in the classroom, though we will always endeavour to do our best for students who are self-isolating. If the live lesson isn't a possibility, we will ensure work is set through the appropriate channels in Teams.

Sadly we are seeing a steep rise in positive cases across the City at the moment, which is why we are reintroducing...

Face masks

At the request of the City Council team (a letter from whom is appended), we are reinstating the requirement for students to wear face coverings in school from Monday. The guidance for this is exactly as was previously, *ie* (quoting *Update 49*):

"We now expect students to wear a face-mask in the classroom as well as on the corridors – although some students are exempt from wearing them (see [here](#)). Such students are encouraged to wear a badge, available from the school office or from the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities team, to signify they are exempt.

"I appreciate that a small number of parents have genuine concerns about their children wearing face-masks in school. If you feel it is inappropriate for your son or daughter to wear a face mask, please write a letter to confirm that this is the case; if your son or daughter is challenged about not wearing a face-mask, the member of staff in question will not take any further action if such a letter is then produced. Alternatively your son or daughter could wear

an 'exempt' badge – please let the school office (or the SEND team) know if you would prefer this to happen.

“Please ensure your son/daughter brings a fresh face-mask into school every day. As ever, thank you for your co-operation”.

Congratulations!

I'm delighted to be able to let you know some excellent news about two of our former students.

- **Neil Brunskill** (2006–2013) is to be ordained in the Cathedral on Saturday 26th June. I'm sure he would appreciate our prayers for his ordination, and also for his future ministry in Holy Trinity and St Luke's, Southport.
- **Jack Stallworthy** (2001–2008) has been awarded an MBE for services to British foreign policy. He works in the British Embassy in Berlin, where he is responsible for policy areas ranging from health, education, the changing world of work and societal issues like loneliness.

Many congratulations to both of them!

We're always very keen to hear news of former students, so if you know of any and have news to pass on, please let us know.

Upcoming Events

Following the Prime Minister's announcement on Monday, we're in a position to clarify what's happening to a number of school events.

- **Sports Day** will be taking place, but not as a whole-school event. Instead, competitions will be held within individual year-groups on one of each cohort's 'short days' (when they normally have PE).
- **Year 7 Induction** will not be taking place onsite – asking boys from different primary schools to come to St Margaret's could easily lead to the virus spreading between those primary schools. Instead we'll be hosting some virtual events and leaving the onsite work until our summer schools (during the weeks beginning Monday 26th July and Monday 2nd August).
- **Year 11 Leavers' Services** are still under discussion.
- **Open Evening** (on Thursday 1st July) will now be taking place virtually. We may hold a physical event, if we are permitted to do so, next term.

Dr Silverstone's section

Dr Silverstone, our Director of Pastoral Care, writes:

“You may have seen in the news recently that Ofsted recently published its Review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges. Our senior leadership team has already begun to discuss this review and will ensure that key messages are listened to and required action is taken. This will likely have an impact on our school's curriculum. As I wrote in April, when the Everyone's Invited website was published, we are committed to engaging with all of our students and listening to any concerns they may have, and likewise, if parents or carers have any concerns about any issues in terms of sexual abuse, assault or harassment or indeed any related issues, please do get in touch with us through [this address](#).

“Linked to this commitment to engaging with our students, you may remember that last week I told you we would be surveying our pupils about their experiences of school. We have already had many responses, but there are more to come. If they haven't already completed it, please encourage your son or daughter to complete this survey [here](#).

“Finally, can I please ask all parents and carers to reinforce a positive message to our pupils about being respectful and responsible members of the local community? Local shopkeepers and residents consistently say positive things about our pupils, but there have been some concerns raised about pupils littering along Aigburth Road – where there are many bins – and some somewhat boisterous behaviour. When our students are in our uniform, they are representing the school, and it is important they do all they can to uphold our standards within the community.”

Survey feedback

Sincere thanks to all those who took the time and trouble to respond to the Parents’ Survey we organised recently. To date we’ve received 231 replies, which is a fantastic response!

- 20% of respondents felt that **Parents’ Evenings** should revert to a physical format; 46% wanted them to remain virtual, whilst almost everyone else (33%) felt some sort of hybrid was the best way forward. We’ve yet to consult formally with staff about this but the message from our parents is clear – you’d prefer most, if not all, Parents’ Evenings to be virtual in future.
- Most respondents (over three-quarters, in fact) also wanted boys to be able to come into school in their **PE kits** on PE days. We’ll take this feedback into account, but there may be some practical issues with this idea now that the draft timetable has students from different years having PE lessons on different days. We’ll take a final decision later this term, taking account of any pandemic-related advice in force at the time.
- A number of parents commented favourably on our **weekly communications** (thank you!) which, as you know, we have made a priority over these last 15 months. 40% of respondents wanted the currently weekly pattern of communications to continue, whilst 34% felt that fortnightly was more appropriate, and 25% wanted to return to the monthly newsletters. We’ll stick to weekly *Updates* for now, but will keep it under review as the pandemic runs (what we all hope will be) its final stages.

Different formats

Do you need letters from school, such as this weekly *Update*, in a different format, such as large print, or Braille? Would it be helpful to have them in a different language? If so, do please get in touch with me (through [this address](#)) and we’ll do whatever we can to help.

Finally...

The busier the week, I suppose, the greater the need for rest and relaxation. At the end of a (insert a word of your choice here) busy week, I’d want to wish all our families a restful weekend, whatever you are up to. I know that many of our students (and parents!) will be glued to the football this evening – come on, England!

We look forward to seeing your son or daughter as ever on Monday morning, and as ever we’ll be in touch next Friday.

Yours faithfully



Stephen Brierley
Principal.

18th June 2021



Liverpool
City Council

Dear Parent / Carer,

In recent weeks, we have seen a rapid rise in Covid-19 cases in Liverpool. Currently Liverpool has rates of 158 [infections per] 100,000 [population] and is on an upward trajectory. The dominant strain of virus in the UK is called the Delta variant and we have seen a steep rise in COVID-19 cases locally. Evidence suggests the Delta variant spreads more easily than previous strains.

As a result, we are requesting that additional measures are brought into schools to slow down the spread of the virus. These controls may cause some disruption to end of year plans that normally take place. Activities such as transition, assemblies, proms and performances may need to be modified and alternative arrangements made. Educational visits may also be impacted by these additional measures. Schools will communicate with parents directly if any of their plans are impacted.

Face Coverings

[From] 21st June 2021, we are requesting staff and pupils in Year 7 and above to wear face coverings indoors whilst in school, including in classrooms where social distancing cannot be maintained, with the exception of certain lessons such as PE. This is an additional measure to support schools to manage the increased risk of school-based transmission due to increasing cases and is fully supported by central government.

The purpose of wearing a face covering is to minimise the risk of transmitting the virus to other people if you are infectious but don't have symptoms. We know that up to 30% of people with COVID-19 don't experience symptoms, and everyone who has the virus will be infectious in the two days before their symptoms start, so wearing face coverings is one of a range of infection prevention and control measures that have been introduced in schools to protect pupils and staff.

Exemptions for wearing face coverings are still in place and further information about exemptions can be found [here](#). Any pupil who has one of the conditions on the exemption list will not be expected to wear a face covering whilst in school. Anyone communicating to someone who relies on lip reading will also be exempt from wearing a face covering.

We also continue to ask that parents and carers to wear face coverings when dropping off and picking up children from school.

As always, we thank you for your continued support.

Matt Ashton
Director of Public Health, Liverpool

Steve Reddy
Director of Children's Services, Liverpool