



17th July 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

As this academic year draws to a close, which happens to be my 30th year as a teacher, I would like to thank you all for your ongoing support of the College. This has been such a challenging year for us all, so I am keen to look forward to September, and welcome a full cohort of students and staff back to our College.

Staff will start back on 3rd September and have two training days on the Thursday and Friday. Students are due to return from Monday 7th September, and we have reserved that first day for Year 7 and Year 12 students only, as we need to carry out our usual induction processes for those particular year groups. All other students will return on Tuesday 8th September.

At Helston Community College, we want teaching and learning in September to be as close as possible to normal. We believe that this is the best way to address any gaps in children's academic development, and, in turn, will help to reduce anxiety and improve wellbeing. We plan to continue with an ambitious and broad curriculum in all subjects, which will be supplemented by carefully targeted activities to consolidate and enhance learning for key examination groups. Of course, our Pastoral Support Assistants and Learning Champions will also be on hand to support individuals who may struggle to re-adjust to the College environment and procedures.

There is an obvious balance to be had at this time in terms of delivering a normal curriculum and health and safety requirements, but we intend to follow the essential safety measures as designated by the Government, which are:

- a requirement that people who are ill stay at home
- robust hand and respiratory hygiene
- enhanced cleaning arrangements
- active engagement with NHS Test and Trace

Alongside this, we have considered how to reduce contacts and maximise distancing between those in College wherever possible, and minimise potential for contamination so far as is reasonably practicable. In order to achieve this, there will be a number of changes to normal practice. Some of these are listed below:

- Each year group will be treated as a separate bubble so that mixing can take place for the sake of setting and options, but strict separation is retained between year groups. Post 16 will be considered as one single bubble.
- Staff will be working between the bubbles and need to keep 2m apart from students. There will be designated teacher zones created in every classroom, with 2m spacing from students.
- In order to preserve bubbles and other measures, there will be designated entry points and exit points, based on the area of the College that the student will be working in. There will be one-way systems across the whole site.
- We will adjust the structure of the College day to allow year groups to take breaks and lunch in different areas at different times. We will allocate certain outdoor zones to each year group bubble. The College day will be slightly extended by 15 minutes to facilitate this.
- Students need to bring their own snacks for breaktimes and a full water bottle. We are looking to provide quick take-away meals – sandwiches, pasta pots, pasties etc. at lunchtime and we will extend dining spaces into the Main Hall on North Site and the Gym on South Site.

- Classrooms will be arranged so that students are facing the front of the class and not facing each other, wherever possible.
- We expect students and staff to adopt robust hygiene routines i.e. 'Catch it', 'bin it', 'kill it' for coughs and sneezes. In addition, hands must be washed or sanitised when entering a College building and before and after any break, change of classroom or any eating.
- Cleaning arrangements will be enhanced, and will focus on disinfecting shared surfaces regularly. Cleaners will operate over the whole of the College day and focus on toilets, hand rails and surfaces in communal areas. Teachers will be in control of cleaning procedures within classrooms.
- Resources that are shared between classes or bubbles, such as sports, art and science equipment will be cleaned frequently and always between bubbles, or rotated to allow them to be left unused and out of reach for an appropriate period of time.
- Doors will be wedged open where possible, and certainly during transitions in and out of lessons, so that contacts with door handles and faceplates are reduced.

For this to work effectively, we need full co-operation from students and parents/carers.

Attendance

In March when the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak was increasing, the Government made it clear that no parent/carer would be penalised or sanctioned for their child's non-attendance at school. The Government's current position is that circumstances have changed and it is vital for all children to return to school to minimise as far as possible the longer-term impact of the pandemic on children's education, wellbeing and wider development. School attendance will therefore be mandatory again from the beginning of the autumn term. This means from that point, the usual rules on school attendance will apply.

We understand the potential concerns of students and parents/carers who may be reluctant or anxious about returning, and we are here to support all our families. Please contact us if you would like to discuss any concerns you may have about your child returning to College.

Uniform

The Department for Education is encouraging all schools to return to their usual uniform policies in the autumn term. The advice that they have provided states that uniforms do not need to be cleaned any more often than usual, nor do they need to be cleaned using methods which are different from normal.

With these guidelines in mind, please ensure that your child wears the correct College uniform each day. We want the students to look smart and confident in their uniform, and minimise the chance of conflict over these issues. If you are unsure of the correct uniform, please check the uniform list on the College website, along with the additional guidance. This can be found at: https://www.helston.cornwall.sch.uk/web/uniform_policy/384726.

Positive behaviour

The College remains committed to high standards, and we encourage positive behaviour from students. We will continue to record Attitude to Learning (ATL) grades in our lesson registers, and encourage students to aim for grades 4 and 5 on our ATL scale.

Low-level disruption is tackled through our 'Ready to Learn' behaviour system. For this academic year, we have added a fifth rule to the original list.

- Follow instructions promptly
- Remain on task
- Listen when others are speaking
- Speak appropriately, with polite and respectful language
- Follow the College's new safety routines for Covid-19

There will be a temporary amendment to our behaviour policy for this year, so that the time-out of lessons is minimised. However, we expect students to learn from their mistakes and the number of repeated misdemeanours will be taken into account when issuing sanctions for poor behaviour.

College Equipment

With the new Covid-19 restrictions, it is more important than ever that students turn up with their own equipment and stationery. As a bare minimum, we recommend a pencil case containing a black, blue and green pen, pencil, ruler, pencil sharpener and eraser. Students should also have their own calculator. In the current circumstances, it would also be helpful if students have a glue stick and set of highlighters. Thank you for your support with this.

Mobile phones

Please remember that there is a ban on the use of mobile phones by students whilst on the College site. Mobile phones should be **'off and away'** at all times, and any phone seen or heard will be confiscated. This includes phones on display in shirt pockets.

New build

The full site is due to be handed back to us towards the end of August and we are looking forward to having more outdoor space and better access to North site. The all-weather pitch is looking amazing and will help us greatly during periods of poor weather. However, some of the landscaped areas will take some time to establish, especially newly seeded grass areas and planting.

Staffing

Sadly, as we reach the end of an academic year, we inevitably say farewell to a number of staff. Two of these members of staff have been with us for quite some time and have made the difficult decision to retire. They are Mr McDonald and Mrs Horne. Mr McDonald has worked for the College for 29 years in a variety of roles, including PE teacher, Head of Year, and Assistant Headteacher. Mr McDonald joined the Senior Leadership Team in 2007, with a focus on pastoral care and behaviour support. He is well known in the College and local community, and will be sorely missed. Mrs Horne joined the College 20 years ago as a School Administrator and has worked her way up to Business Manager. She has had many key responsibilities over the years, including complex budget planning, line managing key areas within our support staff structure and co-ordinating the new build. We are also saying farewell to Mr Tatham, Mr Stivey, Mrs Jones, Mrs Gilbert and Miss Bucknole. We are thankful to all of these staff for all they have brought to the life of the College, and for their commitment to the students: I am sure you will join with me in wishing them all the very best in their future plans.

I wish you all a very happy and enjoyable summer holiday. Let us hope that we can get back to a more traditional form of education in September, in a year that is free from disruption. Over the holiday period, we will be adding additional detail to our plans and will produce a parent/carer handbook for the new academic year, which contains essential information. Please be aware that these plans are based on the current Government guidance for September. Should the guidance change over the summer, our plans will need to be adjusted. Therefore, we advise parents and carers to check their emails and keep an eye on the College website, as we will use these methods to communicate any changes and keep everyone updated.

Yours sincerely



Mr Wayne Jenkins
Headteacher