

9th July 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

As anticipated the DfE announced this week that ‘bubbles’ in schools will cease to be in place in the next academic year. I am sure that many parents and carers will be pleased about this and will be equally, if not more pleased that the system of self isolation for students who are identified as close contacts of another child who has tested positive for COVID-19 will also cease within all educational settings.

One measure that will return as part of the updated strategy is mass testing on return to school in September. Mr Cahill will be writing to all parents and carers in the days ahead to outline the plan for the start of term, which will now involve a stagger for the different year groups. Students within the new Year 7 cohort will be prioritised as this will allow for transition activities to take place given the fact that their transition day was cancelled.

Unfortunately, it is clear that cases of the Delta variant are rising both locally and nationally. Given this, we have taken the decision to reimpose the use of face coverings within the classroom for students from Monday through to the end of the summer term. We are hopeful that this will help to slow down the transmission of the virus within the school community, although it should be noted that the use of face coverings will not prevent the need to self isolate where children are identified as close contacts in the remaining weeks.

We have been advised that several members of our school community have tested positive for COVID-19 within the last few days. We have contacted all individuals who have been in close contact and they have been asked to self-isolate. The link to a COVID Update letter containing guidance and further information can be found [[here](#)].

On a much more positive note, we are making further strides to return back to a semblance of normality. On Thursday of this week, the Art and Photography department held their annual exhibition. This took place on a limited basis in the school hall with students and their families attending by appointment. I am delighted that parents and carers were able to attend this event as it provided an opportunity to view the wonderful pieces that have been produced during this remarkable year by students in Years 11 and 13.



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On the same evening, a number of parents, family members and friends of the school attended the Music department summer concert, which took place in the outdoor space on the quad. Mr Cullum and Mrs Coyle have done a fantastic job pulling the concert together given the fact that some of the original contingent who were due to perform on the evening have had to self isolate this week. It was great to see a number of students from last year's Year 13 contingent return to perform on the evening. In addition, it was also quite evident that our younger students who performed during the evening were inspired by the performances of their more senior counterparts; something that we have missed with students working in bubbles throughout the year. My sincere thanks to all involved as well as those that attended the event.



Finally this week, I would like to thank all parents and carers who took the time to complete the parental survey last week. The initial responses have provided some useful insights and, as promised, we will draw upon the main themes when finalising our strategic plan for the next 3 years. However, I would really appreciate some further responses as this helps to ensure that the comments and themes are representative of the wider parental body. The link to the survey can be found [\[here\]](#). The survey should take no longer than 10 minutes to complete.

I hope that you all enjoy what should be a sensational weekend!

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gary Mullings', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Gary Mullings
Headteacher