

Re: Return to Onsite Activities from 8th March 2021

23/2/2021

Dear Student, Parents and Carers,

The Prime Minister confirmed on Monday 22nd February a roadmap for the gradual lifting of lockdown restrictions. A priority is the return of young people to on site learning in schools and colleges, beginning from 8th March 2021, and we are now planning for your return on that basis. We intend to resume the blended approach previously used in the Autumn, with a large majority of all programmes delivered on site. As in the Autumn, we are planning for this to be part of a carefully controlled timetable pattern, that minimises travel and crossover contacts between groups of students and their classes each day. We are also reviewing the recent guidance to support us in the implementation of an expanded Rapid Lateral Flow Testing offer, as part of the return and alongside our other controls.

Please note that following these announcements, the College has taken the decision to move the staff training morning, that was scheduled for the Tuesday 9th March, to Tuesday 2nd March instead, in order to facilitate a smoother return in the week beginning 8th March 2021. As a result, the previously planned online lessons scheduled during the morning of Tuesday 2nd March will no longer take place and will be replaced with the onsite lessons being planned on 9th March instead.

We recognise the huge benefits that onsite delivery brings when able to provide direct teaching and allowing students to work with peers. Therefore, **from Monday 8th March**, each subject will resume with one extended onsite session a week, alongside the shorter online activities and/or seminars, typically in the afternoons each week.

Timetables will therefore continue to be the current one and this will provide important continuity and consistency, as we transition back to onsite sessions. We are planning to retain the smaller elements of online delivery, alongside the longer face to face session, as this helps to significantly reduce student contact and cross over points during any one day and also ensures that we retain the flexibility, resilience and consistency necessary to keep weekly class contact with all students, even in the event of unforeseen isolations or other disruptive events.

Our study centre facilities and IT resources will remain open and available for booking too, where limited access to suitable facilities at home, or the travel time required, may mean it is more appropriate for students to remain on site for any online sessions too. Study spaces and IT facilities can be booked in the usual ways directly.

As in the Autumn Term, during each visit, we anticipate that most students will only be attending the room they are timetabled to be in and will then leave again at the end. Carefully managed access to catering facilities for those who need to remain on site are will be available, but these are for those who most need these only, as capacity remains limited in order to ensure social distancing and regular cleaning. We have extensive outdoor space and marquee areas for use and use of these areas are considered preferable spaces to use when waiting or during breaks.

We have carefully reviewed the Autumn Term arrangements, in light of the most recent guidance for the return of students. These were highly effective in limiting the extent of potential contacts that could occur during any visit to the College and our wide range of other

precautions will remain in place to further ensure that it is safe and appropriate to engage in onsite learning again. In addition to the timetable and room planning described above, a summary and reminder of some of these is as follows;

- It remains the case that anyone who is experiencing any symptoms of Covid-19, or is living in a household with someone who has symptoms or a positive Covid-19 test outcome, must not attend the College site and must instead follow normal self-isolation steps (typically for 10 days isolation starting from the day after the symptoms begin or the day after a positive test outcome). We also expect all students to engage fully with the government's Track and Trace processes where appropriate and we will be supporting that through our arrangements
- Use of face covering in corridors and communal areas (except where medical exemptions apply). In addition, the most recent guidance has been changed to recommend the wearing of face coverings within classrooms initially too, and we are asking students to comply with this in the initial weeks of our return too. Teachers will provide guidance on this and will be able indicate when exceptions mean this is not necessary.
- Our one-way systems remain as they were in the Autumn term. Everyone is asked to follow these, at all times, as indicated by signage.
- Maintaining good personal and hand hygiene remains important and all students are reminded to use the installed sanitiser stations, including those available on arrival at each room. Good respiratory hygiene advice in the event of coughs or sneezes remains to 'catch it bin it, kill it (using tissues or sleeves, carefully binning tissues and washing hands with soap and water or use of sanitiser gels)
- Students will again be asked to operate in a seating plan by their teachers to minimise the number of potential close contacts that could occur within any class bubble and to enable us to track, trace and isolate these if that became necessary. As previously, students will also be asked to clean their own desk surface/equipment at the end of lessons with the wipes provided.

We continue to ask all those who can, to walk or cycle to the College and for everyone who can't, to be mindful of likely congestion around the College at arrival times if coming by private car. None the less, where public transport use is necessary, there is separate advice and this is supported by collaboration between local authorities and the bus companies to manage capacity and provide dedicated services at busier times.

Anyone who may be at significantly greater risk, such as being extremely clinically vulnerable or where there are exceptional circumstances should discuss this with their PPM and/or Welfare and Skills Key Worker for specific advice and guidance.

The latest guidance strongly encourages students to participate in Rapid Lateral Flow Testing now too. We have written separately to you about this and have established the onsite infrastructure to enable this to be available during the first few weeks. The updated guidance indicates that once three on site tests have been completed, students will become eligible to receive home testing kits to continue testing twice weekly thereafter. We await further information and clarification on this and in the meantime, we encourage you to respond to the communication on Rapid Lateral Flow Testing if you have not already done so to confirm consent to participate.

Yours sincerely,



Paul Wilson
Principal