



Secondary phase newsletter

Creating Tomorrow's Citizens Today

Friday 11th September 2020

Dear Families

Thank you for working with us to ensure that all of our young people and children have returned to school safely and are enjoying their learning. As an all-through school, with over 1600 young people there are many challenges and opportunities, and we look carefully at everything that is going on. It is inevitable that the secondary phase is seeing more changes and tweaks to their daily routines and thank you to their parents who realise that this is a work in progress. We are attaching a letter we received from Hertfordshire Public Health (via HCC) reminding everyone of the importance of taking our responsibility seriously as citizens; how we must not organise or take part in large gatherings with friends, family members or holding parties. The virus is with us for a while and we must not become complacent. We are of course reminding our older students of this fact.

As a school along with dealing with the day to day operational things and ensuring high quality education, we are keeping to our school development priorities (including curriculum, assessment, character development) and also exploring what might happen in the following months. Our Governor Health and Safety committee continues to meet frequently to look at the latest guidelines and to monitor our work in school.

Thank you too to those new parents who have volunteered to become part of our "Parents Staff Association". May I remind everyone of the importance of this group who give generously of their time and also fundraise by putting on and supporting many activities which so many of our young people and their families enjoy. This year it will be a great challenge with the absence of the most loved 'Slice of Summer' and the 'Frost Fair'. We are holding our annual general meeting (AGM) on Monday 12 October at 8pm, a digital meeting. Further details will follow but please do dip in and see what plans we have. We will need you to support us!

WELCOME

We traditionally welcome our new staff at the beginning of each new academic year and we therefore would like to extend a warm welcome to:

Teachers

Charlotte Philips	(Primary)
Chloe Evans	(Primary)
Rebecca Gorman-Gajewski	(Psychology)
Terry Doyle	(Football Academy)
Wendy Brown	(Science)
Daniella Hall	(SEND)
Emily Blackman	(Primary)
Vicky Chuchla	(Geography)



Kim Wallace (English)

Anna Woolcott (Maths)

Trainee teachers (Schools Direct)

Emma Ponder (Primary)

Josh Dear (Music)

Laura Devine (Biology)

Returning from maternity leave

Rebecca Fish (Art textiles)

Laura Davison (PE)

Hannah Ahmet (Geography)

Emily Robinson (Maths)

Daisy Coulbeck (Science)

Jenny Townsend (English)

Support staff

Georgina Braggins (TA primary)

Jenny GLover (TA primary)

Daniella Cox (TA primary)

Jonny Goodson (TA PE primary)

Nicola Gardner (TA primary)

Elizabeth Cave (Access Arrangements Assessor)

Louise Piacquadio (6th form administrator)

Jasmine Seiler (Gap year student)

Harry Ingram (Gap year student)

Kallie Batchelor (Gap year student)

Nancy Waugh (Gap year student)

Grace Maycock (Gap year student)

We hope that they settle in quickly and enjoy being part of our school community.

COVID 19 UPDATE

- In order to minimise the risk of spreading Covid 19 we have put many measures in place including one-way systems and staggered start and finish times. Students are reminded of the importance of regularly washing/sanitising their hands and the need to socially distance. We continue to review the measures and adjust when necessary.
- The Governing Body Health and Safety committee is meeting every two weeks this term to refine the safety measures and to keep abreast of any changes to national and local guidance. Please note the following to help us stop the spread –
- If you have returned from abroad which is on the Government's list you must follow the advice and self-isolate for 14 days
- You must have an appointment before you can come into the school. Appointments can be made via the main office
- Please ensure that your child has all the correct equipment for the day, we are unable to deliver forgotten items
- The signing in and out book for Years 7 to 11 is now located in the vestibule at the front office



The most important symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are recent onset of any of the following:

- a new continuous cough
- a high temperature
- a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

For most people, COVID-19 will be a mild illness. However, if you have any of the symptoms above, stay at home and arrange to have a test to see if you have COVID-19. If you have symptoms of COVID-19 however mild, self-isolate for at least 10 days from when your symptoms started. You should arrange to have a test to see if you have COVID-19. Do not go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital.

If you are not experiencing symptoms but have tested positive for COVID-19, self-isolate for at least 10 days, starting from the day the test was taken. If you develop symptoms during this isolation period, restart your 10-day isolation from the day you developed symptoms.

After 10 days, if you still have a temperature you should continue to self-isolate and seek medical advice. You do not need to self-isolate after 10 days if you only have a cough or loss of sense of smell or taste, as these symptoms can last for several weeks after the infection has gone. See the ending isolation section below for more information.

If you live with others, all other household members need to stay at home and not leave the house for 14 days. The 14-day period starts from the day when the first person in the household became ill or if they do not have symptoms, from the day their test was taken. If anyone else in the household starts displaying symptoms, they need to stay at home for at least 10 days from when their symptoms appear, regardless of what day they are on in their original 14-day isolation period. The ending isolation section below has more information.

If you have symptoms, try and stay as far away from other members of your household as possible. It is especially important to stay away from anyone who is clinically vulnerable or clinically extremely vulnerable with whom you share a household.

Reduce the spread of infection in your home by washing your hands regularly for 20 seconds using soap and water, or use hand sanitiser, and cover coughs and sneezes.



Consider alerting people who you do not live with and have had close contact within the last 48 hours to let them know you have symptoms of COVID-19.

Following a positive test result, you will receive a request by text, email or phone to log into the NHS Test and Trace service website and provide information about recent close contacts.

If you feel you cannot cope with your symptoms at home, or your condition gets worse, then use the [NHS 111 online](#) COVID-19 service. If you do not have internet access, call NHS 111. For a medical emergency dial 999.

If you develop COVID-19 symptoms again at any point after ending your first period of isolation (self or household), follow the guidance on self-isolation again.

YEAR 12 UPDATE

Although we had scheduled an information evening for Year 12 parents on 15th September, we have decided to reschedule this for later in the year. This will enable us to concentrate on providing further detail on the university application process and apprenticeship opportunities at a more appropriate time. Until then, the Sixth Form team will continue to send you guidance and helpful hints for supporting your child at home. Furthermore, you will be able to monitor your child's academic performance via Go4Schools, and your son/daughter's Form Tutor will also be in contact before half term to discuss how well they have settled into life in the Sixth Form. Nevertheless, should you wish to discuss any concerns in the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact me on morrisb@simonballe.herts.sch.uk.

PE KIT

We are currently unable to use the PE changing rooms as we are unable to ensure social distancing, therefore students need to wear their PE kits. Please note that students who are dressed for the day in their PE kits are recommended to wear either black tracksuit bottoms or thick black tights. This is especially important as the weather becomes cooler. Students should also wear a Simon Balle tracksuit top, rugby top or school jumper. Hoodies are not acceptable.

LIBRARY

Please would Y7-13 students and secondary staff who have had library books out on loan since March please now return them asap. There is a returns bin just outside the Main Library door.
Many thanks. I trust your loans were enjoyable/useful/inspiring over the lockdown period!



If you have any queries please email symej@simonballe.herts.sch.uk and we will be happy to help.

NEW CATERING SERVICE

We are pleased to announce that we have appointed a new catering company to provide food at break and lunch. There are exciting new choices made with fresh produce and many of our students have commented on both the quality and the variety.

Director of Public Health

Prof Jim McManus, FFPH, CPsychol, FBPSS,
CSci, FRSB, CharteredFCIPD



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Public Health Service
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Date: 8th September 2020

Dear Parents

COVID-19 CASES IN YOUNG PEOPLE

We are writing to you about the recent rise in cases of COVID-19 in young people under 20, with several outbreaks linked to young people who have attended house parties where people from more than one household have mixed, and as a result have spread the virus. We are taking a number of measures to reduce the rise in infections. But we need your help with these. If the current spread continues, it is likely that we will need to close schools with high numbers of cases for a period of time, and this risks causing disruption at a time when we wish to avoid this. Schools and colleges continue their efforts to ensure we remain COVID-19 secure.

There are **five key actions** for you and your children to take if we are to avoid this situation getting worse, which may mean some schools may have to close, along with further disruption:

1. Do not allow your children to attend, host or organise parties or gatherings which bring together a) multiple households (more than 2) or b) more than thirty people (2 households only) unless the event has been formally sanctioned by the School or Local Authority or is exempt¹;
 - a. You should **only**² meet people you do not live within 3 types of groups:
 - i. you can continue to meet in any outdoor space in a group of up to 6 people from different households
 - ii. single adult households – in other words adults who live alone or with dependent children only – can continue to form an exclusive ‘support bubble’ with one other household
 - iii. you can also meet in a group of 2 households (anyone in your support bubble counts as one household), in any location – public or private, indoors or outdoors. This does not need to be the same household each time.

¹ For example, large sporting events which are still under Government review. For more guidance, please see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do#social-contact-and-events>

² <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-people-from-outside-your-household-from-4-july>

Private parties must follow the guidance set out above. Weddings or and similar type events are allowed to go ahead with up to 30 people with Covid-19 secure planning and measures in place. Gatherings which go beyond these guidelines remain illegal unless authorised or exempt. We can and will take enforcement action on events which contravene the current regulations.

2. Wash your hands regularly with soap or use sanitiser;
3. Wear face coverings when required **ESPECIALLY** on public transport, shopping centres and shops. Enforcement action including the use of fixed penalties where people refuse to comply with these measures will be taken;
4. Maintain social distancing at all times with people outside your household (2 metres as standard, ONLY 1 metre IF you are taking additional measures like wearing face coverings.)
5. If you develop symptoms ring 119 and self-isolate immediately. The self isolation guidance is here <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>;
6. Ensure you and your children get any vaccinations for which you are eligible, especially seasonal flu vaccination. This will prevent us having outbreaks of other diseases at the same time as outbreaks of COVID-19.

House Parties and gatherings

A number of cases have been linked to events where multiple households mix. Events of over 30 people which do not fall into the categories mentioned above WHETHER indoors or outdoors without proper risk assessment or approval, **remain illegal**. We will be taking enforcement action on illegal events and this can include fixed penalties of up to £10,000 on those organising them and penalties on **everyone** attending. We ask you to do everything you can to stop house parties or events. Enforcement action can also include the seizure of sound and other equipment.

Failure to comply any Directions or Notices issued regarding such an event is a criminal offence.

Self-Isolation

One of the ways we are seeking to curb the rise in infections is by asking people who (a) test positive, (b) are symptomatic, or (c) are defined “close contacts” of people who are infected,³ to self-isolate. The period of time varies but advice on this is attached to this letter. The majority of people have self-isolated well.

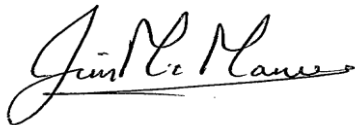
If you have been asked to self-isolate, having a negative test does **NOT** mean you can cease self-isolation. You **must** continue to self-isolate until the end of the period you were advised

³ A list of who can be “close contacts”, and guidance on this, is [here](#).

to take or until a public health official informs you that you can end self-isolation. There are no exceptions to this and enforcement action including directions and fixed penalties can be issued to people who refuse to self-isolate. The link to the Government's Self isolation guidance is above.

We want to avoid a situation where Hertfordshire has to take more restrictive measures. We can only do this if we work together and everyone takes the measures they need to take. We ask you to help us.

Yours sincerely



Jim McManus
Director of Public Health