

JG

11th September 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

From Monday, new laws come into place to stop groups of more than 6 people meeting to socialise. This includes children meeting outside of school. Please ensure that your child is aware of these new restrictions.

Whilst we have introduced staggered start times and alternative entry points, students still travel to and from school and congregate inside the school gates with children from different form and year groups. Please discourage this practice wherever possible.

In the first full week of opening, three Sandwell secondary schools have had to send form and year groups home to self-isolate. Whilst these schools have been able to segregate students for lessons, those who allowed the children to mix in year bubbles are the ones that had to send a whole year group home to self-isolate. We have to do everything in our power to avoid this situation for as long as possible. Consequently, we have reviewed our risk assessments and decided to implement changes to protect your family further and to avoid the spread of this coronavirus.

In view of this and the recent local lockdown rules, pupils are required to wear face coverings at all times, including to and from school, unless in classrooms or eating and drinking. Face masks must be black, navy, or medical grade masks with no patterns or embellishments. If your child has a medical condition that means they cannot wear a mask, please let us know as soon as possible so that we can issue them with an exemption lanyard.

We are also making changes to breaks and lunchtimes to avoid cross-contamination between forms:

Break

Years 7 to 9 will go to their hub areas as normal but will sit in their form groups, where they must wear their masks unless they are eating or drinking. They will stay in forms within their hubs at break.

Years 10 and 11 will go to their form rooms, where they must wear their masks unless they are eating or drinking. From here, students will be permitted to go to their outside spaces. Anyone who fails to keep their mask on correctly or who fails to act responsibly will be sent back to their form rooms where they will spend the rest of their break and lunchtime for that day.

Lunchtime

Years 7 and 8 students will go to their hubs as normal and sit in their form groups, where they must wear their masks unless they are eating or drinking. At 1.05 pm, they will be permitted to go to their outside spaces. Anyone who fails to keep their mask on correctly or who fails to act responsibly will be sent back to their hub where they will spend the rest of their lunchtime for that day.

Year 9 students will go to their hub as normal at 12.25 pm and sit in form groups, where they must wear their masks unless they are eating or drinking. At 12.45 pm, they will be permitted to go to their outside spaces. Anyone who fails to keep their mask on correctly or who fails to act responsibly will be sent back to their hub

Headteacher: **Mrs J Gray, MSc, NPQH**

where they will spend the rest of their lunchtime for that day.

At 1.00 pm, they will return to their form rooms.

Years 10 and 11 students will go to their form rooms as normal at 12.25 pm, where they must wear their masks unless they are eating or drinking. At 12.45 pm, they will be permitted to go to their outside spaces. Anyone who fails to keep their mask on correctly or who fails to act responsibly will be sent back to their hub where they will spend the rest of their lunchtime for that day.

At 1.00 pm, they will return to their form rooms.

If students work in mixed form groups for option subjects, (Years 9-11 only) they will now be seated in form groups within the classroom wherever possible.

These adaptations will ensure even greater protection for our students and help us further protect our school community.

Following the full opening of schools, there have been many questions raised regarding procedures. We have provided examples of questions we have been asked in the hope that our responses may help those of you with similar concerns:

1. A pupil in my child's primary school has tested positive for C-19 and the whole year group bubble has been sent home to self-isolate for 14 days. Does this mean my children in secondary school need to self-isolate too?

No: the Primary school child needs to isolate but the rest of the household do not – unless the primary school sibling becomes symptomatic.

2. I have been contacted by Test and Trace as I have had close contact with someone who has tested positive for C-19. Does my 14-day isolation start from the day of the phone call?

No: it starts from the day you had contact with the infectious person

3. My child has tested positive for C-19. Do I start the 10-day isolation from the date of the test?

No: the 10-day isolation period starts from the first day your child experienced symptoms

4. My child has tested positive for C-19. Can I still go to work?

No: you must self-isolate for 14 days (or 10 days from when you developed symptoms if you have a positive C-19 test).

Thank you for your support in these challenging circumstances. St Michael's students have been exceptional throughout lockdown and since we opened fully last week. They have demonstrated their maturity: being calm, respectful, and understanding of the restrictions and limitations associated with social distancing and additional health and safety measures. I know that we can rely on you to help us continue to provide the safest environment we can whilst retaining our caring and compassionate ethos.

Yours faithfully,



Mrs Jayne Gray
Headteacher