

21 April 2021

Dear Parents

I hope everyone is enjoying the slight lifting of restrictions and we look forward to an uninterrupted term. A few notes for consideration:

### **Test Kits**

We currently have no lateral flow test kits in school but are expecting a delivery in the next few days. We have been advised that these kits will be supplied in quantities of either three or seven tests; if we receive the kits with three tests, then students will be provided with two of the kits to last for three weeks. As soon as these arrive, we shall distribute to students.

We have a number of PCR tests in school, these are the kits that are sent to laboratories for analysis and should be used if a student tests positive on a lateral flow test or if someone in a household develops Covid-19 symptoms. We intend to give our stock of these to the Year 11 and Year 13 students, this is to minimise any potential disruption to attendance during the assessment window. The tests are completed at home and are placed in the post, results generally come back within 24 hours. I hope no student or family member will need to use the test kit but if you have to, when registering the kit the website will ask for a 10-digit code, ignore this and scroll to the bottom of the page and click the link, "register the kit in a different way". As these PCR kits have been issued to an institution, they have an 11-digit code and this link will take you through the process of registration.

### **Face masks**

As I stated in my letter before the Easter break, students will need to continue to wear face masks in lessons where social distancing is not possible. The latest guidance from the government is:

*"It is expected that face coverings will no longer be required to be worn in classrooms, or by students in other communal areas, at Step 3 of the roadmap, which will be no earlier than Monday 17 May."*

All existing exemptions shall continue.

### **Correspondence from Kent County Council**

Please see below a letter from Kent County Council regarding recovery programmes for young people, it includes a link to a questionnaire.

*Dear parent(s) / carer(s)*

*I hope this email finds you well.*

*The last year has been extremely difficult for our children and young people. Every aspect of their lives has been affected, from their learning and wellbeing to their friendships. These effects have been significant, and it is recognised nationally and internationally that children and young people have sacrificed more than most over the course of the pandemic.*

*I am delighted to write to you about an exciting programme that is being developed. Kent County Council (KCC) is leading a community-based programme of positive, engaging and exciting opportunities and activities that help the County's children and young people reconnect with different aspects of their lives, such as education, healthy activities, friends and future opportunities.*

*The idea behind Reconnect comes from young people in Kent, who told KCC they would prefer a positive programme focusing on opportunities rather than emphasising the 'damage' that may have been done to them or their futures by the pandemic. The ambition is that every child and young person will be able to engage with the type of activity that will benefit them the most since everyone will have different needs and desires after the pandemic.*

*To ensure the programme meets the needs and wants of children, young people and their families, Kent County Council is asking as many people as possible to answer some questions that will inform the design of the programme. I would encourage you to fill in [this form](#). It will take you about 10 minutes to complete. Your input will help Kent County Council understand what the wants and needs are of the children, young people and families of the County. Thank you for taking the time to consider this request.*

*If you want to know more about the Reconnect programme, information and a short introductory video can be found at [www.kent.gov.uk/reconnect](http://www.kent.gov.uk/reconnect). The site also enables you to register to be kept informed of the latest news, or to register an interest in being involved.*

### **Year 11 and 13 Assessments**

If students are receiving dispensation for assessments such as extra time or a reader, they will be sitting these assessments in the Oaks theatre where the time and support can be given. Some students may feel that they do not need the additional support in specific subjects and if that is the case, we are asking them to sign a form to confirm their decision. I would encourage all students however, to make use of the dispensations they are entitled to.

### **Year 11 and Sixth Form Proms**

Further details to follow, but advance notice that:

- The Year 11 Prom will be held on Thursday 24 June at Salomon's Estate in Southborough
- The Sixth Form Prom will be held on Monday 21 June also at Salomon's Estate in Southborough

### **Break Service**

From Monday 26 April we intend to restore the break time dining room service, the separate Year group arrangements will be the same at break as they are at lunch time. Those students on free school meals are able to use their allowance at break time or lunch.

### **Holiday requests**

It is clearly uncertain whether foreign travel will be permissible or practical over the summer holiday. I understand that for many families, as well as the benefits that holidays bring, they may have relatives abroad that they have not seen for a considerable time. Unfortunately, the guidance is clear that holidays in term time will be recorded as unauthorised absence and while the school will not be pursuing fixed term penalties in these cases it cannot authorise the absence.



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### **Year 8 Parents' Evening**

Year 8 parents' evening is on the 29 April 2021, this commences at 2pm via the School Cloud virtual platform. Therefore, school will end at 1.15pm for all students, the bus companies have been informed.

I wish everybody engaging in assessments this half term the very best of luck.

Best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Collins", written in a cursive style.

David Collins  
Headteacher