



Update: Impact of New Arrangements

Dear Parents and Carers

I thought I should write to you with a brief update on how our first week with a new timetable has gone. I also have a request to make for your help.

1, Emergency Timetable

Students have responded well to the new arrangements and I am pleased to report that the emergency timetable has had a significant impact on reducing the number of students in communal areas such as the Hall and Cafeteria. Combined with new layouts and seating this has meant that students are able to remain 2 metres apart in the communal areas of College and the informal feedback they have given me is that they feel that College is safer as a result. Whilst the weather has remained dry this week, I am confident that even in poor weather these arrangements give us sufficient capacity in these areas for students who do not have lessons to be seated and remain 2 metres apart. There is no doubt that the emergency timetable presents challenges for students and staff and my aim remains that we return to our usual timetable once it is safe to do so.

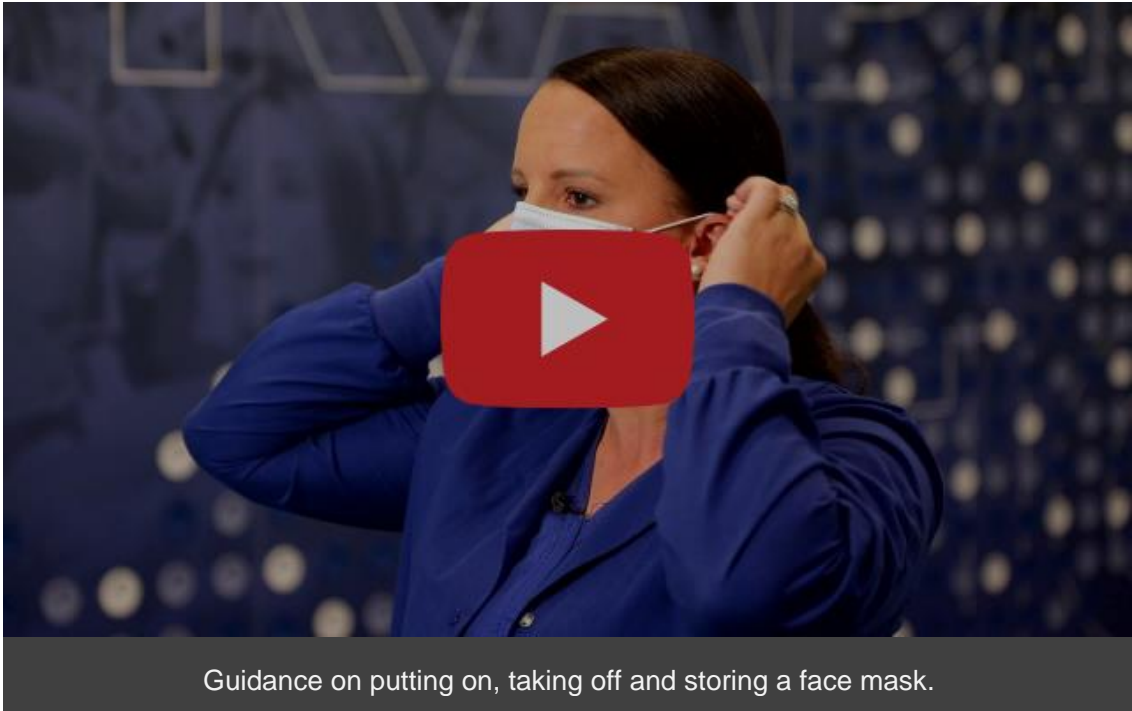
I have included some photographs of the Hall and Cafeteria taken at what had previously been a very busy time of 11.15am to give you an indication of our new layout and also the impact that the new arrangements have had in ensuring physical distancing at all times in these areas.



I am pleased to report that we have had a quiet week and not had to trace and isolate any students. However as long as national and local infection rates remain high we will inevitably have to respond to more positive cases and we remain confident in our ability to track and trace within class bubbles by using teacher's seating plans or through the IT network logs when students are using computers. In all other areas of College measures are in place to ensure that students are 2 metres apart. Staff are supervising communal areas at key times to ensure that students adhere to the safety measures.

2, New Guidance regarding Masks

It is now mandatory for secondary schools and colleges students to wear masks in corridors and communal areas. You will be aware that this was already a requirement for our staff and students. Whilst students are not required to wear a mask in lessons, they are welcome to do so if this is a measure that makes them feel safer. Similarly, if a staff member has underlying health conditions, they may ask their students to wear a mask in lessons and I am fully supportive of any such request and know that our students would respond positively. I will email students to remind them that to ensure their mask is effective it is important that it is put on, worn, removed and stored correctly. This video demonstrates the correct way to wear and remove a face mask.



Guidance on putting on, taking off and storing a face mask.

3, Please can you help us

We are taking every measure possible to ensure the safety of our staff and students whilst they are in College. Please can I ask for your continued support in emphasising the importance of following all safety measures to your son or daughter. It would be a huge help to us if you would speak to your son or daughter to reinforce the message that once they leave College premises, students **must** observe the national lockdown rules that state that they can only meet with one other person outside their household. The police contacted us yesterday to remind us that students must observe social distancing at bus stops and must not gather in groups to walk home together. Please note that the police are able to issue fines of £200 for any breach of lockdown rules which doubles on every offence and we would not want our students to be put in a position where they were issued with such a fine.

On this topic I appreciate the irony that our students can be in class bubbles with 20 other students but then cannot walk on the street or stand at a bus stop with more than one other person, nevertheless, these are the rules in place at least until 2nd December and it is important that we do everything we can to follow the national guidance. I have visited the bus stop and spoken to students who pointed out that the capacity of the buses and the restricted physical layout of the bus stop make it very difficult for them to remain physically distanced.

They did say that the new timetable had reduced these pressures a little and many students are finding other methods of getting to and from College. Nevertheless I have contacted the bus company to request increased capacity and have also written to the local authority to request improvements to the bus stop. I will let you know if I have any success with these requests and in the meantime I will check the bus stop on a random basis to encourage physical distancing as much as is possible in the circumstances.

Once again thank you for your support of the College in these challenging times.

Kind regards

Ed Senior
Principal