



The Priory School

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14th June 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

I hope this finds you and your families well and enjoying the wonderful weather we have had over the past couple of weeks. As usual I am writing to you, to keep you up to date with life at school and pass on some important messages.

Extra-curricular offer

As we head towards the end of the academic year students are still fully focused on lessons but also the wider, extra-curricular offer we have been able to extend to them; supported by the recent sunshine. It is wonderful to see so many students enjoying extra PE sessions, including cricket, rounders and athletics supported by a wide range of staff, not just the PE department. I have also been pleased to see so many 'early risers' attending clubs and circuits before school. Having watched the sessions, it is clear that members of staff, are enjoying them just as much as the students and I very much hope it is adding to pupils' general enjoyment of the school day. If anyone hasn't attended there is still time to sign up, please encourage your child to speak to their tutor; these sessions cater for a broad range of sporting ability and are all about participation and fun.

Year 10 Exams

Year 10 have their internal exams during this coming week and Mrs Knight has communicated separately regarding the timetable, revision and expectations. Teachers have prepared students and focused them on specific topics in lessons, but if your child has any uncertainties please encourage them to speak to the most appropriate member of staff. The assessments will be sat in exam conditions but will be in classrooms, rather than the main exam hall to strike the right balance between focus and support. We are very conscious it has been a long time since the year group have sat anything as formal as this and we were keen to ease them back in.

Covid Update

It will be hard for anyone to escape the news regarding the increasing number of Covid cases, specifically in relation to the new Delta variant, with cases rising amongst young, unvaccinated people, nationally. We are expecting an update from the Department of Education on 14th June and it is highly likely, as we all know, that the 21st June loosening of restrictions date will be moved back. This is likely to be until the end of the school year but is yet to be confirmed. I will write to you separately with more details once I have any new guidance but in the interim, I wanted to keep you up to date with how we will be trying to ensure positive cases remain low amongst our school community:

- Regular emphasis on hygiene; readily available sanitiser and thorough washing of hands.
- We will retain our zones and year group bubbles until the end of the academic year.
- Heightened, daily cleaning measures.

- With Year 11's departure we now have more space outside and have extended the play area accordingly to allow for greater social distancing.
- Extended the dining area space now the weather is warmer, and Year 11 have departed during lunchtimes.
- Face masks continue to be worn in communal spaces and where the 2 metre distance cannot be maintained.

We have seen a reduction in the number of students bringing their own face masks to school and I would ask that you continue to emphasise that your child should bring a mask, plus a spare to school every day to keep our school community safe but also reduce the impact on the environment (and the school's budget) on handing out disposable masks.

Although there has been some coverage in the media with regard to LFT home testing, our guidance on their use remains unchanged. We have a high number of families using these tests and we will continue to provide the kits until instructed otherwise. They have helped some families identify asymptomatic cases and prevent us having to close a 'bubble'.

Uniform consultation

A genuine thank you to everyone who contributed constructive ideas and opinions to the consultation which closed on Friday 11th June. We had 85 responses from parents and carers, approximately 10% of the parental body. There were additional comments from students and, also School Parliament and staff. We will take our time to look at these and I will write to you in more detail, once we have had time to fully absorb all points from all stakeholders, to ensure they are given careful consideration and due attention.

Antisocial behaviour

Unfortunately, we have been contacted by a local club to report that a group of our students, wearing Priory School Uniform were involved in a very unpleasant incident near Pengwern Rowing Club on Wednesday 9th June at about 5.30pm. From the descriptions it would seem these were older students. This involved verbal abuse and inappropriate comments towards some of the club's coaches and club members. Mr Bucknall has visited the club to offer apologies but also to try to identify who these students were. We will be following this up with strong messages to the student body about how they conduct themselves in school uniform and the impact on the reputation of the school amongst the community. I would not want the majority's excellent conduct and contributions to be marred by the minority. Could I please ask you to pass this message on at home and contact school if your child happens to know any further details?

Many thanks for your continued support of school, it is very much appreciated. I will be in touch with further updates in relation to Covid guidance as soon as we have been in receipt of any changes.

Kind regards

Mrs A Pope

Headteacher