



# De La Salle School

Mill Brow, Eccleston, St. Helens,  
Merseyside WA10 4QH

Telephone: 01744 20511  
Email: [delasalle@delasalleschool.org.uk](mailto:delasalle@delasalleschool.org.uk)

Headteacher: Mr. A. Rannard BA (Hons) NPQH

2<sup>nd</sup> October 2020

Dear Parent / Carer,

## Parental Update

I realise that in my last update I managed to upset some parents by suggesting that some young people go out of an evening or weekend, I am sorry if that was the case, it certainly wasn't my intention.

### Current Situation

Let me start by giving you an update on our current situation:

- This week we had 2 students test positive – both in Year 10, and we have had 2 staff test positive, Ms Perez and one of the Local Authority catering staff. All of these were unconnected and appear to be community transmission rather than school based.
- As a result, 24 Year 10 students have been required to self-isolate.
- So far since 1<sup>st</sup> September, we have had 11 of the school community test positive for COVID19.
- We have currently have 97 students in self-isolation and 16 staff absent school, these are for a variety of reasons: advice from test and trace, family members with symptoms etc.
- Our current attendance remains steady at 93% across the whole school (under government regulations, students in self-isolation are coded X and do not count as absences).

### Lunches

Thank you for your understanding with regards to lunches this week. We hope to have hot food available again from Monday, though the range of food may be slightly reduced, as our staffing levels may be lower than normal. If anything changes I will, of course, let you know.

### Our process for dealing with positive cases

I thought you might find it beneficial to know the process we follow when we have a positive test reported to us (some of these actions happen simultaneously).

1. Receive notification of positive test
2. Contact DfE COVID Helpline / St Helens Public Health / Test and Trace
3. Identify close contacts:
  - a. Friendship groups
  - b. Class based seating plans
  - c. Other activities and risk of contact
4. Confirm information with DfE / St Helens PH and discuss actions
5. Arrange for close contacts to be informed and sent home
6. Inform staff, parents and Chair of Governors
7. Identify and act upon any learning points from the case

## Testing

We have been notified by the Cheshire & Mersey Health & Care Partnership, that a Mobile Testing Unit will be available at the Clifton Street Car Park, near the town centre, on Saturday 3 October and Sunday 4 October. This is a walk-in and drive through facility, but it is strictly by appointment only.

Appointments can be made online at:

<https://self-referral.test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/antigen/name>

Alternatively, you can also book a test at Haydock Park Racecourse seven days a week via the above link.

## Reporting positive COVID tests

We have now created an email address for parents to report COVID test results to us. These are auto forwarded to myself and Mrs Peet and will allow us to act promptly, particularly if the results are received of an evening or over the weekend. Rather uncreatively the email is: [covid@delasalleschool.org.uk](mailto:covid@delasalleschool.org.uk) if reporting a positive test please include:

- Name of child
- DOB
- Contact number
- Date symptoms started
- Date of test
- Date of results

Of course during the school day you can also contact the school directly by phone.

## Period of self-isolation

I am aware that there has been some confusion for parents regarding students we have sent home to self-isolate. This has arisen because the period of isolation appears less than 14 days. This is because, in line with PHE guidance, the 14 days starts from the child's last contact with the positive case, not from the day we send them home.

For example: *Child A feels unwell and goes home to isolate on 10<sup>th</sup>, has a test on the 12<sup>th</sup> and receives positive result on 14<sup>th</sup>, then on the 14<sup>th</sup> the school would then identify those student who need to self-isolate but the 14 days will run from 10<sup>th</sup> (when they were last in contact with Child A).*

## Staffing

In our planning, we built in extra staffing capacity for the current crisis and this has really been stretched over the past two weeks. So I would just want to say a public thank you to our staff for all they are doing. As I am sure many of you are finding, just doing the normal things is much harder at the moment, and in schools this is particularly the case.

Staff are having to be extremely well prepared as they hurry from classroom to classroom, remembering to follow the many new rules and regulations, ensure they have set work for students who are absent, take on the extra duties we are asking of them and covering for the much higher levels of staff-absence from self-isolation. So, unlike a headteacher I used to work for whose response was always "*stop moaning, you are getting paid aren't you?*" I would just like to say a big thank you to them and, on the plus side, we are all getting our steps up! 27,000 is the daily record so far.

## Face coverings

Please continue to check your child has their face covering when coming in to school. The students have been really good, but we have nearly exhausted our stock of

disposable face masks. We hope to have re-usable ones arriving soon that we can provide to students, and then charge parents afterwards through ParentMail at cost.

### **Year 11 information Evening**

Our Year 11 students remain our priority and normally around this time we would meet with Year 11 parents to explain how the coming months will look for the GCSE students and how we can work together to ensure they achieve well. Obviously there are still many variables ahead of us, and we cannot meet in person. However, Mrs Mulhall is producing a virtual version and will, shortly, be providing you with as much information as possible.

### **Listening**

We are always keen to listen to parental views and, if possible, we will always act upon suggestions and improvements. So thank you to those who have been in touch. Some examples of us acting upon parental comments include:

- Replacement of Year 11 science stools, partly with normal chairs and desks and partly with backed stools.
- Introduction of weekend reporting email (see above) for positive COVID cases.
- We continue to explore potential solutions for wet lunches, especially for the Year 10 students, who are worst affected.
- Move towards all work being provided through TEAMS to avoid confusion through too many systems of communication.
- Seeking Year 11 parental questions which will be answered in the virtual information being sent by Mrs Mulhall.

We are all finding our way through the current crisis, so if you see an obvious failing or area for improvement then please let us know.

### **Students in isolation - school work**

A reminder that all students who are self-isolating, should be able to access their work through Microsoft TEAMS, this will also inform them of any live or recorded sessions they can attend.

### **Open Evening**

The local lockdown has now meant that we have had to change our plans for our Open Evening this year. We will now be holding a virtual Open Evening on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> October at 4.30pm and 6.30pm. Any prospective parents should email [open@delasalleschool.org.uk](mailto:open@delasalleschool.org.uk) for a choice of Zoom or Teams link to the event. We also have a range of information, virtual tours etc. on our website at <http://www.delasalle.st-helens.sch.uk/open-evening/>

### **Finally**

Again I offer my thanks for your understanding and support throughout this time. It is certainly not how any of us want things to be, but it is important that we make the most of the situation for our students.

Yours sincerely,

**Andrew Rannard**

Headteacher