



# De La Salle School

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

13 November 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

## Weekly Parental Update

I am sure we all shared the sense of relief upon hearing the positive news regarding the rapid development of a vaccine. This brings renewed hope for all of us of a return to some sort of normality at some point in 2021. I am sure we all look forward to 'the good old days' of getting to see and hug family, go on holidays, out for meals etc. (I for one have really missed the almost daily visits from my mother-in-law). In school as well, we are desperate to see the return of all the trips, extra-curricular activities, clubs, training, rehearsals etc. As always, my update is in two parts: new information and regular reminders.

### Part 1 - New Information

#### Current Situation

To update you on our current situation:

- Since the last update we have had 3 students test positive – one in Year 7 and two in Year 11.
- As a result, 16 students across various year groups were required to self-isolate.
- So far since 1<sup>st</sup> September, we have had 29 of the school community test positive for COVID19.
- We currently have 49 students still in self-isolation and 16 staff absent from school, these are for a variety of reasons: advice from test and trace, family members with symptoms etc.
- Our current attendance remains very steady at 93% across the whole school and 84% once students self-isolating are included (under government regulations, students in self-isolation are coded X and do not count as absences).

#### Reminder – School Finishes Early on Monday

- **Monday 16<sup>th</sup> November:** students will finish between 1:00pm and 1.30pm on a staggered departure as no buses will be available that afternoon. Sadly we cannot accommodate students waiting until 3:00pm on this occasion as the main site will be empty to allow the cleaners full unrestricted access.
  - 1.00pm **Year 7** (via Mill Brow) and **Year 8** (Alder Hey Rd)
  - 1.10pm **Year 10** (Alder Hey Rd)
  - 1.20pm **Year 9** (Alder Hey Rd)
  - 1.30pm **Year 11** (Alder Hey Rd)

Please note:

- a) On Monday break and lunch will be combined into a 30 minute brunch service, as is normal on our reduced days.
- b) Younger siblings are welcome to wait for older siblings in the Iona Housebase after being dismissed.

## **Parking**

Once again parking is an issue both before and after school, causing considerable congestion and putting young people at risk. I am now at a loss for how many times I can say this. So with apologies to the vast majority of thoughtful parents that this does not apply to: **please drop off and collect your child well away from the school entrances. Parking near the school entrances or by the buses is dangerous and selfish, so do not do it.**

## **Year 10 Pastoral Meetings**

Parents of Year 10 students should have received information about how we will deliver these meetings virtually. This is new territory for us all, but hopefully the technology will work and we will be able to use the same system to ensure the parental meetings for the rest of the year can also take place.

## **Online Learning**

I hope any students who are finding themselves in self-isolation are being able to access the online work and support from school. If you have any issues please let us know by contacting your child's Head of Year or Mrs Mulhall who is coordinating this provision.

## **Mental Health Support for Parents and Staff**

As you will know, we already have the Kooth system of mental health support in place for students. I am pleased to inform you that the NHS have commissioned a sister mental health support service to Kooth, aimed at over 25s. It can be found at [www.gwell.io](http://www.gwell.io). It can offer confidential services, ranging from advice on self-care up to crisis management for the full range of mental health problems. It is open to anyone living in a St. Helens postcode.

## **Part 2 - Regular Reminders**

### **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.

### **Symptoms**

I have attached the useful 2 page reminder of what you need to do in cases of COVID, and can I remind all parents and students to be vigilant for symptoms which include at least one of:

- a high temperature;
- a new continuous cough;
- a loss of or change to your sense of smell or taste.

**Please do not send students in to school if they or other family members are awaiting a test or if they have symptoms.**

Around this time of year, it is common for people to start to get coughs and colds. The following link to the BBC website provides a useful explanation of the differences between cold symptoms and COVID symptoms. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-54145299>

### **Further Information**

The guidance for schools: [https://www.gov.uk/guidance/education-and-childcare-settings-new-national-restrictions-from-5-november-2020?utm\\_source=5%20November%202020%20C19&utm\\_medium=Daily%20Email%20C19&utm\\_campaign=DfE%20C19](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/education-and-childcare-settings-new-national-restrictions-from-5-november-2020?utm_source=5%20November%202020%20C19&utm_medium=Daily%20Email%20C19&utm_campaign=DfE%20C19)

There is also a **guide for parents** (though at the time of writing this was still waiting to be updated): [https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak?utm\\_source=30%20October%202020%20C19&utm\\_medium=Daily%20Email%20C19&utm\\_campaign=DfE%20C19](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak?utm_source=30%20October%202020%20C19&utm_medium=Daily%20Email%20C19&utm_campaign=DfE%20C19)

### **Mental Health and Wellbeing**

There is no doubt these are testing times for everyone and we would encourage anyone who has concerns about themselves or another person to seek help. This could be through school and the pastoral staff that we have. Alternatively, visit the special section of our website which covers:

- Direct links to lots of different types of support
- Advice and guidance
- Activities to help you or others
- Information on Anxiety, Mental Health, Wellbeing and Mindfulness.

The link is: <http://www.delasalle.st-helens.sch.uk/parents/coronavirus/mental-health-and-wellbeing/>

### **Finally**

I also want to make a special mention of Mrs Gill, who many of you will remember was very unwell last year. As a result, under the current lockdown, she is not allowed to come into work. However, she has managed to set up a room in her house and delivers the lesson virtually via the help of a cover supervisor and a visualiser, ensuring her students do not miss out. She is a real Lasallian Star!

Yours sincerely,

**Andrew Rannard**  
Headteacher