



De La Salle School

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9th July 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

Parental Update 9th July

I realise most families will be excited about England making the final on Sunday, though others, for whatever personal reasons, may feel differently – each to their own. However, one thing that most people can agree on is the excellent way in which Gareth Southgate has led the team.

At a time when many may feel we lack true leadership, Gareth's honest, calm, kind and reflective approach has been wonderfully refreshing and brings hope to us all that unity rather than division can be successful. It is so important for our young people that there are positive role models out there for them to follow.

COVID Related Information

Current Cases

This week we have seen the following cases of COVID within school:

- 6 student cases this week (2 x Year 7, 1 x Year 8, 2 x Year 9 and 1 x Year 10)
- 2 staff cases
- 48 cases since 1st Jan (11 staff and 37 students) and
- 79 cases this academic year (16 staff and 63 students).

Though our in-school rates have come down and remain relatively low it is clear from the Borough-wide figures that infection rates continue to rise, so please remain vigilant for symptoms and continue testing.

Testing – Tuesday 13th July

We will be hosting the mobile testing unit next week. The unit seeks to sample-test in order to gain a clearer picture of rates of infection. This will take place on Tuesday 13th July. It is intended that they will randomly test around 10% of our student population (approximately 100 students).

PLEASE NOTE: the only students who will be included in the random sample will be those who have already granted permission for testing. This permission can be removed at any time by contacting delasalle@delasalleschool.org.uk

Government guidance

The government have now given further guidance on stage 4 of the roadmap and in particular how this will affect schools. The key issues you should be aware of for **September** are:

- Schools to continue risk assessing and contingency planning
- To continue to manage positive cases through isolation
- No future requirement to bubble groups of children
- No future requirement to trace contacts, this will be taken over by Test and Trace
- From 16th August, under 18s no longer required to isolate if they are a close contact

You can perform miracles by touching the hearts of those entrusted to your care.

- Face coverings no longer required
- Ventilation will still remain important, but balanced with maintaining a comfortable temperature
- All students should receive 2 onsite lateral flow tests 3 to 5 days apart before returning in September*
- Staff and students should continue twice weekly testing until end of September
- No shielding of Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) staff or pupils
- Remote education should be continued.
- School visits can recommence in the autumn term (domestic and international)

* We are currently working on how this will look for students when they return in September

Non-COVID Related information

Request for later start on Monday 12th July

I am aware that some staff, parents and students have enquired about a later start on Monday, following the football. Though I would love us all to have a later start, following an evening of successful joyous celebration, sadly this will not be the case.

There are a number of reasons for this: many of our students come to school by bus and these only run at a set time, there are also many parents, especially with younger children, who would need to take time off or arrange childcare. Obviously if the government declare it a National Bank Holiday, then things will be different, though they are leaving it a little late to make any announcement!

3 Year Plan

The plan is now written and ready to go. After approval by Governors this coming Wednesday, next week I will be able to share a summary of how we aim to take the school from where we are now, to a school of excellence for your child by 2024.

School Standards and Expectations

We have tried, as much as possible, to be accommodating of students in the final stages of the term and in light of the pandemic, particularly in relation to uniform, phones, PE kit etc. However, upon our return in September, not only will our 'normal' standards and expectations return, but, as part of our 3 Year Plan towards excellence, these expectations will increase for all students.

Marks and Spencer

As you look towards buying next year's uniform, you may find it useful to know that Marks and Spencer have 20% discount on school uniform – just mention my name at the checkout.*

*This last piece of information is not true and discount is not dependent upon mentioning me.

House System

Next Year we will be looking to re-introduce a House System to the school. This will be different to the previous pastoral house system (where students were in mixed age form groups). The new House System will consist of 4 Houses, named after our 4 founding schools:

- Mount Carmel
- Champion
- West Park
- Notre Dame

The house system will be used to drive inter-house competitions across a range of sports, academic activities, performing arts and creative events, along with including recognition

for behaviour and attendance. I am hopeful that this will be the perfect addition to help us create that extra bit of magic for the student experience next year.

Year 10 Post 16 Options - Group Work

On Monday 19th and Tuesday 20th July all Year 10 students will attend a post 16/careers session, delivered by Miss Moran (Careers Lead) and Mrs Scully (Independent Careers Advisor). During the session students will be made aware of the various post 16 options available to them, start the process of writing their own CV and look at Local Labour Market Information.

Forthcoming Events (items in bold indicate different school finish time)

Wednesday 14th July: Year 10 RSE Drop Down Day
Wednesday 14th July: Full Governing Body Meeting (5:00pm)
Thursday 15th July: Year 9 RSE Drop Down Day
Thursday 22nd July: School closes for summer (12.10pm)
Thursday 12th August: GCSE Results Day (details tbc)

And finally...

I realise many parents are frustrated when we contact to say their child needs to isolate. The past week has seen Mrs R have to isolate as one of her school bubble (yes she is also a teacher) tested positive. Sadly, this has coincided with my youngest's 18th birthday this weekend and so the cancellation of our plans. So, I fully empathise with how disruptive this is and assure you that, unlike some schools who send whole classes and year groups home, we only send the identified close contacts and friends.

Have a good weekend and let's hope it really is coming home!

Yours sincerely,

Andrew Rannard
Headteacher