



De La Salle School

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2nd July 2021

Dear Parent / Carer,

Parental Update 2nd July 2021

This week the school has been a hive of activity, not only in the classrooms but with staff preparing and planning our curriculum for September. This has been a considerable ask, but the staff have responded positively and I am excited for the impact this will have on student learning over the next few years.

In the week ahead, and equally exciting, is the start of training and planning with our new 1719 Society. This group of students are eager to restart many of the activities that COVID has interrupted, and also have a number of new initiatives that will enhance our student experience.

COVID Related Information

Face Coverings

Sadly, as the number of cases rise, we have had to re-introduce the wearing of face coverings in all communal areas, and strongly encourage their use in classrooms. Though face coverings do not prevent close contacts having to self-isolate, they do help reduce the spread of the virus – helping to keep us all safer.

Current Cases

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

- 13 student cases this week (2 x Yr 7, 5 x Yr 8, 3 x Yr 9 and 3 x Yr 10)
- 1 staff case
- 40 cases since 1st January (9 staff and 31 students) and
- 71 cases this academic year (14 staff and 57 students).

In the past week, most have involved students who we had already identified as close contacts and so were already in isolation.

Symptoms

We continue to encourage families to be vigilant for any symptoms, including more recent reports of a sore throat being a symptom, and ensure students who are displaying symptoms, do not come into school.

Twice Weekly Testing

To help tackle this rise, we continue to encourage all staff, students and their families to take part in the twice weekly Lateral Flow Testing. Students were issued today with their next set of tests whilst families can collect them from the local test centres.

Non-COVID Related information

Goodbye and Good Luck

This week we said goodbye to two of our staff:

- Mrs Sue Rigby is leaving after 13 years working as a teaching assistant in the school.
- Mr Alan Hamilton leaves us after 30 years on our site staff.

I am sure you will join me in thanking them for their service and wishing them well as they move on to the next stage of their lives.

Aspiring Medics (Yr 11)

We have been asked to share a free online event for Year 11s and soon-to-be 12s who are just starting to think about applying to medical school. This is primarily aimed at Year 11s who will be starting A-levels (or equivalent) in September 2021.

It will have doctors and current medical students covering the application timeline, work experience, entrance exams and everything they need to hit the ground running in September. An event timetable can be found on the Google registration link below.

Event name: Medicine Application Timeline - Getting Ready

Location: Online

Date: 21st August 2021

Ages: Current year 11 (going into year 12 in September)

This is a FREE event and booked on a first come first serve basis. Google registration link: <https://forms.gle/Dud254nM1dozd3uF7>

Resilience Support

Barnardo's St Helen's Resilience Service is a new service, developed through collaboration between Barnardo's and St Helens CCG, Public Health, Local Schools and North West Boroughs Health Trust (NWBH).

They are part of the St Helens Thoughtscape – First Stop For your Mental Health – the early support offer for children and young people in St Helens. The overall aim of the new service is to address and meet the emotional wellbeing needs of primarily, secondary school aged young people living in St Helens at the earliest point of intervention possible. Each school has been allocated either, a therapist or mental health practitioner who will be working in their school. (Details are attached)

This means our students, staff and carer/families will now have access to:

- Pupil drop in sessions
- Parent/Family/Carer drop-in sessions
- Staff drop-in sessions
- Brief therapy of 1-1 Sessions to young people
- Group work for young people including: Decider Life Skills group work (CBT&DBT skills), anxiety group work and other bespoke workshops identified by schools.

Library Service Consultation and Information

Garswood Library will reopen on Monday 5 July 2021, offering a click and collect service and essential IT access. Garswood Library is the 11th library to re-open following Covid restrictions easing over the last few months.

St Helens Borough Council has also launched a twelve-week consultation on the draft Library Strategy, which brings forward a vision for the future delivery of a 21st century Library Service, responding to the needs of library users and embracing community involvement. Paper copies are available from all open libraries, or you can complete the online version, link below: <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/J4CQWT/>

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

Monday 5th July: Year 9 Immunisations (Not COVID related)
Wednesday 7th July: 1719 Training day
Wednesday 14th July: Yr 10 RSE Drop Down Day
Wednesday 14th July: Full Governing Body Meeting (5pm)
Thursday 15th July: Yr 9 RSE Drop Down Day
Thursday 22nd July: School closes for summer (12.10pm)

And finally

As we enter the weekend with optimism that maybe it is, at last, 'coming home', or that Andy Murray may be getting back to fitness, I hope that you and your families are able to switch off and take time to be together. (I wonder if next week's update will still have that level of sporting optimism?)

Yours sincerely,

Andrew Rannard
Headteacher