

Friday 18th September, 2020.



Penketh High School

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I'm sure you will be aware that it has been announced today that a number of areas across the North West, including Warrington, will be subject to local restrictions from Tuesday. This means that from next week we need to adopt further operational procedures in line with guidance relating to the local restrictions adopted. From Monday ALL pupils will be required to wear a face covering when accessing communal areas around the school, this means pupils will need to wear face coverings when in corridors, toilets and all other areas with the exception of classrooms. We'd appreciate you relaying the importance of this new arrangement to your son/daughter and ensure that they have a face covering available from Monday as part of their daily equipment. The wearing of a face covering is essential in protecting the people around us and so we all have a responsibility to wear these in the areas identified in order to look after the wellbeing of each other.

I wrote to you at the outset of the term to explain that there would be a number of areas of operation that we would review on a regular basis and I informed you that we would be looking at our lunchtime provision and the use of the footpath before the end of the second week back at school. I felt it important to update you following discussions in school this week relating to these issues. I also wanted to update you on some subtle changes and improvements to our remote learning offer for pupils absent from school at any point.

Lunchtime

Our lunchtime provision is working well. The staggered sittings have remained calm for pupils and allowed us to maintain separation of year group bubbles. Each year group has access to a seating area to eat lunch and a large yard to utilise. As you know, we initially asked pupils to bring in a packed lunch whilst they familiarised themselves with the new arrangements and they have been fantastic in their attitude when adopting these new practices. We now feel in a position to be able to offer an enhanced service that would allow pupils to purchase hot food items from school.

From next week we will be offering hot grab items for pupils to buy along with a selection of cold sandwiches. Pupils will need to pre-order food for the week ahead to allow us gauge demand in these unusual circumstances, to do this we'd ask that you complete an order form each weekend with your child. To make this easy we have made the order form available online and this can be filled out on any smart phone, computer or other mobile device. The order form is located through the following link and you'll be able to see the full range of menu choices available for the week ahead, <https://bit.ly/32GObpZ>.

I'm sure you know that, normally, to pay for food pupils will need to top up their account either by using our biometric systems in school or by parents topping up their accounts through Parent Pay. For obvious reasons pupils will not be able to top up their accounts using the biometric systems this year, nor will they be able to use biometric systems when paying for items. So in order for pupils to have the funds to purchase lunch at school parents will need to top up pupil accounts via Parent Pay and when paying for lunch pupils will be manually looked in our system up at the point of sale by the canteen staff.

We are aware that some Year 7 pupils haven't received their Parent Pay details as yet and so next week Year 7 can bring cash to pay for lunches as we have a procedure in place to be able to accommodate this for a single year group in the short term.



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THE CHALLENGE ACADEMY TRUST C/O PRIESTLEY COLLEGE, LOUSHERS LN, WARRINGTON WA4 6RD. COMPANY NUMBER 10689247

Penketh High School, Heath Road, Penketh, Warrington, WA5 2BY

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Principal: Mr J Carlin BA(Hons) NPQH



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IN CAREERS



AMBASSADOR SCHOOL



To keep things simple, especially in the first instance, we have adopted a very simple pricing structure similar to those in local shops and supermarkets based on a meal deal concept. For £2.50, pupils will be able to purchase a main hot item or sandwich and a drink. For £3.00 pupils will be able to purchase a main hot item or sandwich, a drink and a side item such as a cake or packet of crisps. We will not be selling cakes or crisps as individual items but pupils will be able to purchase drinks as stand alone items should they need to.

This simple approach is aimed at being able to serve all pupils with the added complication of not sharing biometric devices, providing them with time to eat their lunch and also to afford staff time to clean areas ahead of the next sitting.

Home/Remote Learning

Inevitably some pupils will find themselves in a position where they need to self-isolate or seek a test where they are symptomatic. This means some pupils are likely to need to spend time at home undertaking remote learning. Parents will be aware that during lockdown we followed our "normal" in school timetable through Teams with staff setting work for pupils to complete. Pupils could then interact with staff through Teams.

We were pleased with this but felt that we could further improve our offer to support a scenario where some pupils within a class might be absent from school, whereas others remained in class. We wanted to ensure that pupils could follow the same programme of study whilst away from school to support an effective transition back to school following any period of absence.

Parents will be aware that we've developed booklets for every module of learning a pupil undertakes this year to support progress in a scenario where we can't share resources. These booklets enable pupils to follow a sequence of learning through the part of the curriculum they are undertaking.

The remote learning offer this year allows pupils to continue to work through their booklets even when at home so that they can keep pace with their class. A digital copy of the booklets they use in class will be provided in the Team for each of their classes, staff have then provided video resources of the input they would normally receive in class so that pupils can tackle the work set for that lesson. Often these video resources are staff from school talking through content that would be covered in class or they could be specially selected wider resources explaining or modelling new content to pupils. Pupils simply need to undertake the work in order of the lessons within the booklet using the associated video resources for each lesson in sequence.

Pupils will still be able to access the teams to leave questions and queries for staff about the work set, but it's important to recognise that staff are likely to be teaching across the day so responses from staff are not likely to be instantaneous.

Today all pupils have received refresher training on how to access Teams and information about the resources that staff have posted in Teams. Help videos have been posted on the website to support pupils. These demonstrate how to access Teams and show an example of how to access remote learning resources for this year. The videos are available through this link <https://www.penkethhigh.org/remote-learning-help/>. If you still require assistance you can contact remotelearning@penkethhigh.org.



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Footpath

I am aware that some parents are keen for us to readdress the issue of the footpath. As mentioned above the significant increase in the infection rate across Warrington and the local restrictions introduced have informed our thinking at this time. Whilst we have a plan to begin a phased return for some use of the footpath, we have decided to delay the introduction of this as a direct result of the rapid increase in infections.

Our morning and afternoon routines are working exceptionally well and are helping us to keep year group bubbles separate; we feel this is especially important at this time. We know that the footpath entrance to school can cause bottlenecks and at the narrowest point can cause a problem when members of the public are accessing the path in the opposite direction.

I completely understand that for some parents this may leave you frustrated. I want to assure you that we'll review this on a weekly basis and we do have one eye to the approaching winter season when the evenings draw in and the weather can turn a little more unsettled. Whilst the weather is forecast to remain relatively fine next week and the light remains good before and after school, we felt the decision to not reintroduce access to the site via the footpath – an area that could promote mixing or contact with others – was correct given the circumstances surrounding local restrictions and the heightened rate of infection.

Can I take this opportunity to thank both staff and pupils for their efforts this week. It is a new way of working for us all and we've all had to adapt to new procedures. Pupils have undertaken this with a fantastic attitude and I'm pleased to say have done so whilst demonstrating high levels of engagement across lessons. Learning scores remain very positive with over 98% of all learning scores demonstrating at least good learning and engagement, pupils should be congratulated on their return to school and their efforts.

I'd also like to thank parents for their ongoing support and understanding and also for the kind words and messages that have been sent in. I'm sure that you're all aware that a number of schools nationally and locally have experienced disruption with either year groups or classes being sent home – in some cases whole school closures. We are working in unprecedented circumstances and I can assure that we're doing all that we can to operate in a way that mitigates risk whilst providing the best possible educational provision to support pupils making progress.

Yours faithfully,

Mr J Carlin.
Principal.



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