



St Benedict's College

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11 September 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian

As we come to the end of our first week I want to thank you and your child/children for the positive contribution that each of you have made to what has been a very successful "Restart". In the course of this week a number of issues have come to light that we need to work on together.

Face Coverings

- The majority, but not all students, have worn their face masks this week, while on corridors and in enclosed spaces, like the canteen. **Please encourage your child to wear their face masks when they are on site and ensure that they bring a face mask, and perhaps a spare one, to school every day.**
- It is strongly recommended that face masks are worn on school buses. Please encourage your child/children to do this.

Drop Off and Pick Up

- **You must not come on site in your cars, to drop off or collect your child/children.**
- Drop off and collections should take place outside the school gates. The Church car park is available and should be used by all parents.
- The only vehicles allowed on site are delivery vehicles.
- Please respect this arrangement as vehicle movement on site currently presents a serious risk to student's health and safety.

Parental Visits to school

- **You are not permitted on site and are not allowed to come in to the school building, unless you have a pre-arranged appointment.** You cannot come on site to collect your child/children or to drop off items your child/children may have forgotten.
- You should contact Reception if you need to make an appointment to see a member of staff.
- Parents who have an appointment must wear a face covering when they are in the building. Only one parent should attend any meeting arranged.

Uniform and PE uniform

- PE uniform has presented an issue for us this week. We have asked that students wear their school sports kit on days when they have PE. PE uniform details are available on the school website (www.stbenedictscollege.co.uk) under the New School Day tab. Please familiarise yourself with the requirements.
- Unfortunately, many students have come to school this week in sports kit and loungewear that is not part of our school PE kit. **We have made the decision therefore that if your child does not have the prescribed school PE kit that they should wear their ordinary uniform to school on the days that they have PE, until such times as they are in a position to come to school in our school PE kit.** I recognise that the expectation that the students have and wear the school PE kit places an additional financial burden on parents but we are not unique in expecting that students wear school PE kit in PE lessons. Students are travelling to and from school in their PE kit, it is essential therefore that students wear it to the same high standard and with the same pride as they do their ordinary school uniform.

Medical Needs and Medication

- We have been reviewing our Medical Register this week and we are concerned that not all students who have a diagnosis of asthma have a spare inhaler in school. **If your child has asthma you must make sure that you have provided us with a spare inhaler for your child.** Parents should contact Reception to arrange an appropriate time to drop it off. All inhalers should be deposited in a plastic bag and be clearly labelled with your child's details. Please ensure that the inhaler is in date.
- **If your child has anaphylaxis and requires an EpiPen or has another medical need that requires him/her to take medication while in school please contact Mrs B Kelly, SENCO, as a matter of urgency.**

Attendance

- We have had some absences this week as a result of COVID concerns. Thankfully though we have had no confirmed cases among students or staff. I want to thank parents for their vigilance and for respecting PHA guidance which clearly says that **"Parents must not send their child/children to school if they or anyone in their household are displaying any COVID 19 symptoms. They must follow PHA guidance on self-isolation and testing."**
- Please continue to contact Reception to let us know if your child's absence is COVID related, inform us if your child/children are being tested and keep us updated on results received.

Absence notes and requests to attend Appointments

- DE guidance asks us to avoid sharing materials. Absence notes and letters from parents relating to appointments present a challenge as a result.
- Until further notice, absence notes should not be sent into school. Instead, parents should email attendancestbenedictcollege@outlook.com with **"Absence Note"** as the subject heading. The email should include the student's name, form class, date of birth, date(s) of absence and brief explanatory details. Please also include the most convenient contact number in case clarification is required.
- Similarly, any request for your child to leave school to attend an appointment should be emailed to the same address, attendancestbenedictcollege@outlook.com. **"Appointment Request"** should be the subject heading used. The email should include the student's name, form class, date of birth, date of appointment, time student will be required to leave school, time student will return to school and brief explanatory details as to the nature of the appointment. Please also include the most convenient contact number in case clarification is required.

Finally, enclosed is information for parents issued by DE yesterday. A letter from the Chief Medical Officer and an accompanying information leaflet. They provide clear guidance on what to do if your child develops symptoms of COVID -19 or a common cold or other similar infections during the current pandemic. They are a useful reference for us all and I would encourage you to review them carefully.

Thank you once again for all your help and support at this very challenging time. As ever, if there is something we have missed or if you have questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact myself or a member of the team.

Yours sincerely

Catriona McAteer
PRINCIPAL