



27th February 2022

Dear Parents and Carers

We hope that you've been enjoying half term. Apologies for the 'bumper' letter, but please do read to the end.

- Changes to government guidance on self-isolation and testing
- Term time holidays
- Uniform expectations from the start of Term 4
- Sixth Form Dress Code
- Phones and headphones
- Punctuality to school
- 2nd dose Covid Vaccinations - Tuesday 1st March
- Letter from Aspens
- Potential OFSTED Inspection in coming weeks or months
- Early finish, Thursday 3rd March

Changes to government guidance on self-isolation and testing

From the start of Term 4, students and staff are no longer advised to test twice weekly due to the high level of community immunity and the very low risk that infection now presents.

If a student has any of the main three Covid symptoms they are advised to isolate and book a PCR test through <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>. The three main symptoms remain:

- a high temperature
- a new, continuous cough (or if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste

If a student tests positive they should isolate for five days. They can then carry out LFD tests from day 5 and return to school once they've tested negative on two consecutive days, if they no longer have a temperature and feel well enough. Otherwise they can return after 10 days, again, if they no longer have a temperature and feel well enough.

The school will have a limited supply of LFD test kits, but parents can also order online through:

<https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests>.

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Please continue to record any positive test results through the Test Register system as well as through the gov.uk website.

Remote learning resources will remain in place for students who are isolating due to a positive test. More information on this will follow in coming days.

If we have a particular rise in positive test results, we may be advised to re-introduce asymptomatic testing for some or all students (in liaison with the local Health Protection Team). If this is the case we will receive and distribute further test kits to students at the time.

Term Time holidays

We have seen an increased number of term time holiday requests, with a number citing Covid-related reasons. The government guidelines are very clear on this not being a valid reason for schools to authorise requests. Parents should expect such requests to be turned down in all but the most exceptional circumstances.

The impact of Covid on school attendance has been significant, not only on individual students, but also in the additional burden that it places on teachers and the school as a whole. We therefore ask that you do all you can to avoid any further absence during term time.

Changes to uniform expectations from the start of Term 4

We wrote to parents and students about this at the start of half term. We met a group of about 15 students on Friday morning, who spoke very maturely and shared their worries about some of the changes proposed.

As planned, from the start of Term 4 hoodies will no longer be permitted in place of blazers. Students will be able to wear coats on top of (but not instead of) a school blazer and if classrooms are particularly cold then the teacher will allow students to continue to wear their coats if they wish.

However, we will be delaying our planned changes in relation to PE / Dance kit for a short period of time so that we can engage more fully with the feedback of students and work with them to best manage this change. Until further notice, students may continue to wear PE or Dance kit for the day when they have PE or Dance (this does not relate to extra-curricular activities). If wearing PE kit, students must ensure that they are wearing correct (i.e. Gordan-branded) items, or plain navy leggings. No other alternatives will be acceptable.

We will be tightening up on consequences for uniform infringements. This will include untucked shirts (much more obvious without hoodies!), having no tie, and piercings (only

one stud allowed in each ear, and no other facials piercings). In more extreme cases, for example coming to school in jogging bottoms, or refusing to remove and hand in a nose piercing, parents may be contacted and asked to come to school and rectify the issue immediately. We realise that this is an inconvenience, but we must maintain high standards of uniform at all times, so please ensure that your child is leaving the house in the correct uniform.

Sixth Form Dress Code

Sixth Form students set the tone for the lower years in terms of dress and behaviour. Although Sixth Formers do not wear uniform, they are expected to comply with the Sixth Form dress code. As young adults on site, Sixth Formers follow many of the same expectations that we ask of staff notably:

- facial piercings are limited to one small nose stud (not a nose ring) and any body art should be concealed.
- 'Non- natural' hair colour is not permitted
- For safeguarding reasons Sixth Formers (like staff) **MUST** wear a lanyard to identify themselves on site. This must be worn around the neck. Replacement lanyards and ID cards can be purchased via the Sixth Form office (via ParentPay).

Whilst many meet these expectations all the time, we have to have too many conversations with those that don't. We will apply sanctions for breaches of dress code. Please do reinforce this at home.

Phones and headphones

We would ask parents to refamiliarise themselves with the section of our behaviour policy that refers to mobile phones in school (pages 9 and 10 <https://www.gordanoschool.org.uk/attachments/download.asp?file=298&type=pdf>), and, in particular, these points:

- 17.2.4 Students must not use their device to call home, parents or any other person. They must ask at the Student Centre should they wish to make a call. Student Centre staff may seek advice from the Pastoral Team on a case by case basis before any student is permitted to call home.
- 17.2.5 The school has the right to confiscate any device if it is misused in school. The device will be placed in the Student Centre and can be collected by the student at the end of the day. For third and further offences, the device can only be collected by a parent or another designated adult.

Safety issues are arising whereby children are calling parents themselves and not coming to the Student Centre. It is vital that you do not come to school to collect your child without speaking to a member of staff. If you have any concerns about your child, please call Main Reception immediately and let us deal with the situation through the correct channels.

Please discuss and reinforce that if phones and / or headphones are seen, the items will be confiscated until the end of the day. On the third occasion, a parent or other adult will be required to come and collect the items. If a child refuses to hand over their device then a higher sanction will be applied and parents contacted.

Please note that Sixth Formers are only expected to use their phones/headphones in a Sixth Form study or social space, and only in class with a teacher's permission.

Punctuality to school

You may recall previous communications regarding lateness to school. This causes considerable disruption to the start of the day for the student, staff and others in their classes.

Students are expected to be on site by 8.40am at the latest so that they can be in their tutor bases ready to start tutor time by 8.45am. From the start of Term 4 we will therefore be locking all gates at 8.40am promptly. Any students arriving late will need to access the site via the Clevedon Road (main) gate, which will be staffed by a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Consequences will then be applied for those students who arrive after 8.40am. For any genuine reason for lateness, parents should ensure that they e-mail the Attendance Team (attendance@gordanoschool.org.uk) to clarify the situation.

Please note that Sixth Form students need their lanyard to access entry through the Clevedon School Gate; they are still monitored for punctuality and Year 12 are not expected to leave site during lesson time.

2nd dose Covid vaccinations - Tuesday 1st March

For those that have given consent and who are eligible for a second (or delayed first) Covid vaccinations, these will be taking place on Tuesday. Students will be sent down to the Main Hall a tutor group at a time.

We are not able to accept late notification of consent, so if consent has not been given, you will need to book a second vaccination through the national booking service or attend a 'walk-in' clinic.

Letter from Aspens.

Please see the separate attached letter from our Catering supplier, Aspens, regarding keeping dinner money accounts topped up. Thank you.

Potential OFSTED Inspection in coming weeks or months

We are expecting OFSTED to pay us a visit in the relatively near future. It could feasibly be at any time from now. We will receive half a day's notice of a visit, and inspectors will be in the school for two days.

The most important thing for us is to provide your children with the best educational experience that we can. An OFSTED inspection is a significant moment for a school as an endorsement that work and does provide a perspective on the school that people trust. It is therefore in all of our interests that the findings show the true strengths of the school.

When we do receive notice of the visit we will speak with students and write to parents. You will have the opportunity to complete a survey and we would ask you take the time to share your views, as you have so wonderfully directly to us over recent times. The views of parents are a really important aspect of the inspection, so thank you in advance for that.

Early finish, Thursday 3rd March

School will finish at 3pm on Thursday 3rd March for the Year 13 Progress Evening.

You will notice from above that there is a need for a bit of a 're-set' on a number of areas for the start of Term 4. This is very normal at this time of year (and especially after the disruption of Covid), but your support in reinforcing expectations at home plays a vital role in making this work. This will allow us to continue to return to a more 'normal' situation and enable us to focus on making sure the experience for our students remains the best that it can be.

A final reminder that we have an INSET Day tomorrow and we look forward to welcoming students back on Tuesday.

With best wishes, as ever.



Tom Inman
Headteacher