



25th October 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

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Covid Cases and In-School Measures

As you will be aware, we were hit with a very significant rise in positive Covid cases in the last couple of weeks of Term 1, leading us to take additional preventative measures in school and move Year 11 to remote learning for the last two days of term. This was a picture reflected in other local schools, with a number of local schools moving multiple year-groups to online learning last week.

Clearly, we are hoping that the half-term break this week will allow case rates to reduce, but this will only happen with a reduction in social contact. I hate to recommend a further limitation to social interaction with others - it's so important for us all, and especially young people - but it will be crucial to keeping as many students in school as possible as we enter November. Thanks for your support with this.

On return to Term 2 we will be maintaining additional in-school mitigations until we can review case rates after half term. We will confirm the exact measures in place for the start of Term 2 prior to Monday's return. We will also be sharing updated guidance for students that are absent from school to support them as fully as possible in their learning.

In the meantime, please continue with the enhanced (3 times per week) LFD testing over half term, and if short of test kits, please order these online. We are expecting our next batch of LFD test kits over half term and will distribute these to students next week.

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Flu and Covid Vaccinations for 12- to 15-year-olds

Parents of students in Years 7-11 will have received my letter from Friday with further details, including the link to the online consent form:

<https://www.gordanoschool.org.uk/site/data/files/letters%20home/90449D9B24EC6316247B541A3FCE8B06.pdf>

A reminder that the consent forms must be completed by midnight on Saturday 30th October and will not be accepted after this time. Please complete the consent form whether giving consent or not - it hugely helps the administration of the process.

Students are not able to be vaccinated if they have had a positive Covid (PCR) test in the last 28 days. Where this is the case (or for those that miss their in-school vaccination for a different reason) our understanding is that parents will be asked to book a test through the online NHS vaccination booking service. This service is actually live now to book vaccinations for 12- to 15-year-olds (and we believe that a letter to parents is on its way from the government about this), but parents are being asked to use the School Immunisation Programme where possible for the first vaccination in order to help manage capacity.

Further information on the process is available on the government website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-vaccination-resources-for-schools/covid-19-vaccination-programme-for-young-people-guidance-for-parents>

Uniform in Term 2

As we start Term 2 it is timely to revisit uniform and expectations. Below are a few reminders of what is expected:

- Trousers can be fitted, but must not be tight fitting (as leggings would be) around the lower leg *.
- Girls are able to wear school branded shorts and tracksuit bottoms.
- Footwear must be black polishable. Cloth material footwear is not permitted.
- Skirts/Shorts must sit just above the knee. It is not permitted to roll up skirts or shorts.
- PE leggings must be navy blue and either Gordano branded or non-branded. Black leggings are not permitted.
- Shirts must be tucked in at all times.
- If wearing school uniform shorts/skirts, socks/tights must be grey or black.
- Uniform must be either full school uniform or full PE/Dance Kit on PE/Dance days. A mix of both is not permitted - e.g. Blazer, shirt, tie and leggings. (The only exception will be a school hoodie with normal uniform during the colder terms, as outlined below).

*This is the deciding factor in whether trousers are meeting expectations. One of the pairs of trousers linked in our July letter has caused some confusion for parents, which we acknowledge has been unhelpful. The deciding factor is that trousers must not be tight fitting around the lower leg.

To give parents and students plenty of warning, from January 2022 the trousers in the link (originally included on the list of acceptable trousers) will no longer be allowed:

<https://www.next.co.uk/style/st398331/322512#322512>

Students may continue to wear PE/Dance kit on the days they have PE or Dance but may change at the start / end of the lesson should they choose to.

Please also ensure that if students choose to have piercings, hair dye, false nails, nail varnish etc, that these are removed or hair/nails sorted before returning to school in term 2. Should students come to school without any of the above resolved, parents/carers will be asked to collect their child and resolve the issue asap. Should a piercing be unremovable due to infection, we will need medical professional confirmation of this, otherwise it will need to be removed.

Finally, as we move towards term 2 and with the temperature dropping gradually, and with having to keep windows open for ventilation as part of COVID measures, we will allow students to wear their Gordano PE or Dance hoodies instead of their school blazer. They may wish to wear their blazer in addition for further warmth. We must emphasise that the hoodie can only be either the PE or Dance hoodie. Students will be asked to remove any other hoodie that is not a PE or Dance hoodie.

The school reserves the right to make the final decision on whether a student's uniform meets the expected standard.

Permission for use of photographs

We are reviewing the way in which permissions are sought for the use of photographs (and videos); this will involve a more detailed set of permissions based on different uses of images, as advised by our Data Protection partners.

This will take place in line with the publication of the first Achievement Review of the year for each year-group. Parents will receive information regarding the consent process, which will be a joint decision between parent(s) and the child.

Year 7, 8 and 9 'Drop Everything and Read' (D.E.A.R)

We are excited to be launching Drop Everything and Read for Years 7, 8 and 9 in Term 2. Once a week, students and staff across these year groups will 'Drop Everything and Read' for 20 minutes of a designated lesson. We have learned from research and other schools that this session, designed to promote enjoyment of reading as well as enhance vocabulary and the ability to read for sustained periods of time, is of real benefit to students.

Students will therefore need to have a reading book of their choice with them as part of their daily equipment, to ensure they are always reading for D.E.A.R. Please do see the library page on Firefly for recommended reads and guidance for parents to support reading <https://gordano.fireflycloud.net/school-library>

This is in addition to the reading that students carry out during tutor times and the library reading lessons for Years 7 and 8.

Wishing you a very pleasant half term break, and I will write again later in the week to confirm our ongoing Covid mitigation measures.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Tom Inman', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Tom Inman
Headteacher