



PENSBY
HIGH SCHOOL
Care Respect Inspire

8 September 2020

Pensby High School

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Headteacher: Mr K Flanagan

Dear Parents & Carers

Can I start by thanking you for all the support and help around reopening, it is really appreciated. Especially your support around packed lunches and reducing the pressure on food service, we are making changes already to lunch service and they are outlined below. As someone who is making packed lunches for two children at secondary school, I do realise the time required for this, thank you, this has helped. We are now though confident that we can get many more students through service, so please feel free to send your children into school without packed lunch if that makes things easier for you. If you are using our food service, I would ask that wherever possible that you use the online payment system (GoPay) to ease congestion in the dining hall.

Can I remind all parents that we are operating year group bubbles at lunch and break and students are in different areas of the school, separated out, with different toilet arrangements. We are pushing ourselves and to make sure that every lesson runs and the practical elements of the school curriculum continue: food, art, PE, ICT D&T, music etc etc.. To do that we need to make sure that if there is a COVID case in school we have clear policies around cleaning, hand hygiene and separation of year groups. We have been asked by a couple of parents why we cannot let the students outside as their children would prefer an entirely different arrangement. It is really very simple, we have do not five spaces, so students would mix and we do not have staff to man 10 spaces indoors and outdoors, 10 sets of toilets and two dining halls and their queues. We must have the indoor spaces as we simply cannot rely on the weather and they are linked to toilets as per the plan, outdoor spaces are a wish we are trying to get to.

Equally we cannot allow the students unfettered access to the school buildings prior to school starting. I am, however, working to staff the zones from 8.20 to 8.35 as of 11 September 2020. With the aim being to open them from 8.10 in the near future:

Once students enter the buildings they must go to their bubbles/zones			
Year group	Entrance to site	Zone	Staffing
7	Main gates - Irby Road and then via the fire door into their zone – main hall	Main school hall	Jane Holmes
8	Main gates – Irby Road and then pupil entrance, turn right and head to their zone.	Old Boys’ school hall	Paula O’Hare
9	Main gates – Irby Road and then pupil entrance and straight across in to the playground and through and into their zone.	Gym via fire door from playground	Phil Cantillon, Colin Jones and Debbie Clarke
10	Gate to fire road next to the sixth form block and contractors area.	Into the zone in the sixth form via the fire road	Rob Woodward-Booth
11	Gate to fire road next to the sixth form block and contractors area.	Into zone via fire road, following the road around the back of the school and into playground. Entrance to Drama studio via fire doors	Pam Crammond and Helen Brown
		Gate by Fire Road	SLT on rota
		Pupil Door/Entrance	Duty staff
SSC as a fall back			Emma Price

Students who cannot observe the rules around the zones and school site will have to wait until 8.35 to enter I am afraid, so please reinforce the need to keep, the bubbles going, as it limits transmission, protects families and will help to ensure that the minimum number of students are sent home when there are cases in school. Thereby protecting parents from having to take time off work to look after children sent home for 14 days.

I have been asked to remind you that all pupils in years 7, 8 and 9 and those who have opted to take GCSE art in years 10 and 11 have been provided with an art pack of basic materials e.g. sketchbook, coloured pencils, paints, oil pastels etc... These materials must not be taken home, they are for use in lessons due to social distancing measures and pupils will not be allowed to share equipment. If these materials are treated with care and respect they should last all year, however, if anything gets lost or damaged pupils will be asked to replace these. We have provided these free of cost to pupils, but at a cost of nearly £4,000 to the school, please reinforce the need to leave these at school and please make sure that they come back to school if they are inadvertently taken home as we do not have spare packs.

Other subject areas are providing wipes and spays and students are asked to clean anything that they are worried about, including tables and chairs – however, please ensure that all students come to school with the basic equipment: pens, pencils, rulers, calculators etc.. If this is an issue for you, please let me know and I will make sure that the small stock we keep as a school is used to support those students who need help.

There is a new version of the plan for reopening going on to the website, along with the detailed risk assessment in line with DFE guidance and submitted to the local authority and trade unions, which meets and in many places exceeds the guidance provided to the school. Changes are highlighted in red, in effect there are four significant changes from the original plan, the first of which you are aware of:

1: the change in the time of lunch, moving lunch forward to what was period 4

2: bringing back tables into the dining halls for lunch service. These are only for students who are buying food from the canteen at lunchtime. Everyone else, packed lunch or no food must go to the bubbles, lunch and break. Two reasons primarily: the logistics of getting through service, travelling to and from the zone and we have students trying to eat roast dinners off trays on the floor. I cannot continue to ask students to do this; we need to do better for them.

This change will be in place for Wednesday 9 September 2020.

3: students will need to wear a mask in both the toilets and the changing rooms. It has become absolutely clear that students are not able to keep to social distancing rules in these areas. To be honest I am not great at it either, so it is not surprising, but these are smaller areas and difficult to ventilate. I am reluctant to move to having students come to school in PE kit as some students have in the past spoken about how uncomfortable they are travelling to school in what amounts to less clothing, they feel exposed. We have doubled the number of changing rooms in use, separated out the toilets and we are treating these areas with a cleaning solution that kills viruses for a month as well as additional cleaning. So, I am as confident as I can be that the environment is clean, but we need masks to reduce down the possible person to person risk.

To help this, we have a small stock of disposable face masks and clear plastic bags at reception. Students who do not have a mask can come and for as long as it is affordable we will continue to provide these. We need to use these wisely though please.

4: zones will be in place before school to help secure bubbles and social distancing, and keeping the students out of inclement weather as we move forward.

There have been a few hiccups in the first few days, but I have to say that it has been a remarkable smooth start to the year, so perhaps my sleepless nights have been in vain. The start though has been the product of the hard work of students, parents and staff, and I thank all of you for that.

Your children have been an absolute credit to you, they really have.

Yours sincerely



Mr K Flanagan
Headteacher