

QUEEN ELIZABETH'S GRAMMAR SCHOOL

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11th September 2020

Dear Parents, Carers, Students and Staff

Friday 11th September 2020 Bulletin

Thank you for such a fantastic week and having faith and patience in the systems and measures we have put in place to ensure a safe return for all. Seeing happy students, engaged in their learning, in the smart QEGS uniform and spending time with their friends and peers has been really heart-warming - welcome back!

We always knew that the real test of our plans would be when staff and students returned and many aspects have worked splendidly and some require fine-tuning. A weekly bulletin is to be sent to highlight any changes and/or foci to ensure our provision remains safe and high quality.

Home school communication:

As outlined in our July and August information pack, staff will be contacting parents much more frequently by telephone and email. Staff will be using the 3:00-4:00pm time to make calls about concerns, praise plus 'safe and wellbeing' checks. What may be considered 'minor' successes or concerns, which may not have resulted in telephone calls in the past, will now form part of our new approach to wellbeing and safeguarding. It is important that students appreciate even the smallest gestures of kindness, effort and positive attitude will be recognised in what are quite challenging times for us all. Equally, silliness and poor attitude or refusal to do what staff request will result in much swifter sanctions, ensuring that all can remain safe and well in school. Please support us by talking to your children and making them aware of this new approach.

School Driveways:

We now have designated driveways to limit numbers and reduce congestion when students arrive and depart school. These are marked with posters and signs: Years 7,8,9 should all use the 'down' drive (down route for vehicles) and Years 10, 11 and Sixth Form should all use the 'up' (up for vehicles) drive at all times.

ParentPay Top-Up:

Please check that your child has sufficient credit on their account. Now that the canteen is open and students have found the range of on offer, they are spending! There is a daily spend limit, don't worry.

Face-coverings and sanitising around school:

In communal areas (corridors, canteen, hall, library, toilets etc.) it is important that we reduce the risks as much as possible. Therefore, we are encouraging students, staff and visitors to wear their face-coverings at these times. For students who have forgotten to bring one, we have issued them with their own. However, as you can imagine we do not have endless supplies so please ensure that your child has their own each day. We have installed almost 80 wall mounted hand sanitiser dispensers around both sites and bottles of sanitiser are available in all classrooms. Students must still wash their hands or sanitise as they arrive and depart from every lesson, using the school canteen and at any point they move around the school site.

Our welcome back video which includes health and safety guidance can be found here:

<https://youtu.be/RfG7E7o1UvY>

Lunchtime rota:

After the first week of our new lunch rota, we will be making some minor adjustments to help accommodate students' wishing to visit the toilet and to have sufficient time to eat their lunch. Lunch will be extended by 5 minutes and the following times will be in place from Monday 14th September:

- Year 7 - 11:00 to 11:25
- Year 8 - 12:00 to 12:25
- Year 9 - 11:30 to 11:55
- Year 10 - 11:10 to 11:35
- Year 11 - 11:40 to 12:05
- Year 12 and 13 using main site canteen - 12.10 to 12.25
 - Year 12 using 6th Form Cafe 11.30 - 11.55 and Year 13 using Cafe 12.00 to 12.25

Toilet access during the school day:

Again, some minor adjustments will be made to support students requiring the toilet. This remains a challenge in school as we will not risk year groups mixing during the school day. We are responsible for all tracking and tracing of our students throughout the day, who they have had close contact with, where have they been and for how long. This does mean that we will continue to oversee and manage visits to the toilet to ensure we reduce risks. However, the additional 5 minutes for lunch is aimed at providing the time for toilet visits on the way to, during and returning from lunch. We have also spoken with staff about avoiding drawing attention to students.

Filled water bottle

Please make sure your child has a filled water bottle each day to stay hydrated; water fountains are not available to use due to Covid restrictions.

Visitors to school:

All schools have been advised to keep adult visitors onsite to a minimum. However, we appreciate that sometimes it is important to see someone in person.

- If you have a query, please email (enquiries@qegs.email) or telephone 01335 343685.
- If you wish to make an appointment to speak to a member of staff by phone or in person, please allow 24hrs notice for a response and confirmation.
- Only access the reception area if you have made an appointment and then complete the 'Track and Trace' signing in forms as requested.
- Please wash or sanitise your hands on arrival and departure.
- Please wear a face-covering when onsite.

School Transport:

- All students must wear a face covering and sanitise their hands when they board and disembark from the school bus.
- Face coverings must be worn for the duration of the journey and not be removed at any time.
- Students must sit in year groups (Derbyshire buses) or in route order (Staffordshire) and remain in these seats for the duration of the journey. Students are now being organised into year groups before they board any bus.
- Transport providers and the authority governing these buses have the right to remove any students' right to travel on school transport should their behaviour be unsafe and/or a breach of the guidelines above.
- See attached documents for some further guidance.

Road Safety and Wellbeing of QEGS students:

We are so pleased to see our students and staff return to school. We appreciate that there have been many challenges and plenty still to face. However, we are committed to making school as safe as it can be and we believe that returning to school will have such a positive impact on our students' safety and wellbeing.

On the matter of safety and wellbeing, Derbyshire County Council have recently launched proposals to extend restrictions on 'No Waiting' zones to address safety concerns on some of Ashbourne's roads.

There is already a 'No Waiting at Any Time' zone outside of the school gates (see page 27), demarked as a solid white line. This is to keep traffic flowing and most importantly, to keep your children safe from vehicles which would have to 'pull out' to manoeuvre around a stationary obstacle. The new DCC proposals (maps on pages 22 and 27), will extend and add to these restrictions improving the safeguarding around road safety for your children when they

arrive and depart from school. The recent incident at the Green Road junction with Cokayne Avenue has only emphasised the danger of these routes and roads.

<https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/site-elements/documents/pdf/council/public-and-statutory-notice/prohibition-and-restriction-of-waiting-order-various-locations-in-ashbourne.pdf>

What will we do to improve student safety and wellbeing on our roads?

- We appreciate that some of our students wander onto the road and can often be distracted from the focus of road safety. We will be launching a series of assemblies for all year groups on road safety along routes around the school site; guidance on safe arrival and departure and the responsibilities of parents and students in keeping other road users and pedestrians safe when students arrive and depart school.
- We will be increasing our staff presence at the school gates and bus bay areas to help ensure parents do not put students' safety at risk and to direct parents to safer parking areas, ensuring QEGS children are safe on the roads and pavement around the school site.
- We will work in partnership with Derbyshire County Council and the Police to ensure our community roads are as safe as possible.

What can parents and carers do?

- Where possible, encourage your child to walk to school. Exercise and fresh air is good before and after a day in school.
- There has been a recent increase in the use of private transport in an effort to avoid Public Transport. If you are choosing to use private transport, please park well away from the school entrance, in a space where other vehicles can pass safely and so that students have clear lines of sight along the roads and crossing points.
- Do not enter the bus bay area at all (unless directed to do so for a school event which would only ever be outside of the arrival and departure times for the school day).
- Talk to your children about road safety, paying attention to risks such as wearing headphones or using a phone when crossing the road.

Together, we are sure, we can help improve the safety and wellbeing of our students on our local roads and avoid the risk of a serious accident.

Finally!

It has been a whirlwind of a week, rewarding and exhausting, we are sure, for both staff and students. Please ensure your children get some rest, prepare for next week, complete any homework and/or remote learning and return looking forward to our second week of term.

Stay safe and well and remember 'Hand-Face-Space'.

Yours faithfully



Mr S Garrity
Headteacher