



Dear parent(s)/ carer(s),

At the start of the Summer term of the 2021-2022 academic year, I am writing with a brief update on some things that have happened at LHS since Christmas, and some key reminders.

Last term was certainly a really busy and purposeful term. There was still a degree of challenge posed by Covid, particularly in terms of staff and student absence. Students certainly deserve credit for their continued resilience in coping with these challenges.

We all hope that the Summer term will allow us to operate as a school in a more “normal” way. Of course, we will continue to adopt a safe and sensible approach to our remaining risk reduction measures, as outlined below.

UPDATE ON COVID

- As a school, we are now following the advice from the government in the *Schools COVID-19 operational guidance* document, published in February 2022 as part of the national *Living with Covid* strategy.
- We thought it would be useful to remind everyone of the fundamental control measures that form the basis of that strategy. The guidance states that within schools there is a requirement to:
 - ensure good hygiene for everyone;
 - maintain appropriate cleaning regimes;
 - keep occupied spaces well ventilated;
 - follow public health advice on testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases of COVID-19.
- We are obviously following that government advice carefully. As an additional measure, we are still allowing staff and students to wear masks if they wish to do so in school, but there is no requirement for this. If the situation changes in regard to wearing of masks, we will let you know.
- Advice to students about what to do if they test positive for COVID-19 has also changed. The current guidance is as follows:

If a child or young person has a positive COVID-19 test result they should try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people for 3 days after the day they took the test, if they can. After 3 days, if they feel well and do not have a high temperature, the risk of passing the infection on to others is much lower. This is because children and young people tend to be infectious to other people for less time than adults.

- The guidance for adults is that they “*should try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people for 5 days after the day (they) took your test.*”
- We have updated our risk assessment to take account of this guidance. We will continue to monitor cases of COVID-19 over the coming term, and will respond carefully to any changes to government advice.

LUNCH SITTINGS

- As you know, we successfully trialed our arrangements for a single lunchtime and break time during the last week of the Spring Term.
- We have made a few tweaks to the timings to enable all students to eat a hot lunch if they wish to do so. Overall, the change has gone very smoothly.
- We will now operate under the same routine for the rest of the year, and beyond. The timings for lunch are as follows:
 - lunch will start for all students at 1.20;
 - Year 7, 8 and 11 will be served in the first sitting;
 - Year 9 and 10 will be served in the second sitting, which will start at 1.40 (a bell will ring to announce the start of this second sitting);
 - the Snack Shack will be open for “grab and go” style food during both sittings;
 - PM registration will start at 2.05 for all students.
- A quick reminder – students with packed lunches should eat in the outside area or under the Big Top, to allow more space for students in the canteen to have a hot lunch.

PUNCTUALITY PROCEDURE

- The majority of students at Little Heath School continue to be punctual to lessons, and to Tutor Time. It is such a vital element of our basic school routines.
- We believe that students deserve some praise for “getting it right” every day, specifically in terms of punctuality. Therefore, from the start of the Summer

term, every fortnight we will be operating a Prize Draw system where every student who has been on time to all their lessons will have the chance of winning some significant prizes. In addition, form tutors will be issuing regular rewards in tutor time.

- When students are late to lessons or late to school, they obviously miss valuable learning time. Each lesson lost is another missed opportunity and each late arrival to class adds up over time. We are keen to ensure every student arrives to their lessons on time, to give a purposeful start to each and every lesson and to reduce disruption to their learning and the learning of others.
- We will be operating our usual “late desk” system again in the Summer term, and thought it was useful to remind everyone of the rules.
 1. If a student arrives late to lessons 3 times in 1 week, they will receive a letter home so that you are aware. We would be grateful if you could talk to your son/ daughter about the importance of punctuality.
 2. Students will also receive detentions, initially a Same Day Sanction from 3.30-4.30pm and subsequently, if their punctuality does not improve, a Headteacher’s Detention which runs from 3.30-5.00pm on a Friday.
 3. If a student continues to be late to lessons following this sanction, they will be internally excluded for a day and parents will be invited into school to meet with a senior member of staff to discuss next steps.
- Of course, this only applies to a minority of students, but we thought it was important for all parents and students to hear that we are tackling lateness to lessons firmly, for all the right reasons.
- We want everyone to succeed at LHS. We do not want lateness to lessons to affect anyone’s education. It is another example of the “back to basics” drive that I have been talking about so often recently, especially in assemblies. There has been enough disruption to learning over the last two years. We must continue to maximise learning time as a fundamental principle of how the school works!

SPORTING UPDATE

- The West Berkshire Netball league started again this term and all year groups have enjoyed getting back to playing these matches after a two-year break. Well done to all the students who have been taking part.
- The Reading Football leagues are also back with most year groups looking to have progressed to the semi-finals.
- The Berkshire County Cup has also seen some success this term for the Boys' teams with the Year 8, 9 and 11s still in the competition, coming up to the semi-final rounds.

UNIFORM

- I am sure that any issues with uniform have been sorted over the Easter break, ready for the start of the new term on Monday. This is again an aspect of our "back to basics" strategy. We know that parents share our belief in the importance of smart uniform in school.
- Three specific reminders about smart uniform for the summer term:
 - Students must wear polishable school shoes to school each day. They should not wear trainers (including *Air Force Ones*).
 - Students should wear plain school coats – hoodies do not count as school coats, as made clear in our Uniform code.
 - Our policy for facial piercings is clear and consistent. Students should not wear facial piercings in school, but can wear a clear plastic retainer that remains flush to the skin if they wish to do so. This was an agreement made in consultation with students.
- Thanks for your support with this. A copy of our uniform code is available on the website for reference.
- Sixth Form students should please ensure that they are adhering to the new Dress Code for Year 12 and 13, which was again agreed in consultation with students.
- We will be running a uniform check at the start of the Summer term, as part of our regular process.

PLEA FOR INVIGILATORS

- If anyone would like to offer support to us by acting as an invigilator for the summer examination season, we would be hugely grateful. Please get in touch with us through the following email: recruitment@littleheath.org.uk.

UPCOMING EXAMINATIONS

- I would like to take the opportunity to say well done to Year 11 and Year 13 students for the way in which they have approached their studies this year, despite the challenges they have faced. I wish all of them the best of luck for their forthcoming A Level and GCSE examinations, which start in less than a month.
- Please remember to keep quiet around all examination venues throughout the Summer term, especially around the Hall, the Activity Studio and the upstairs Drama Studio in A Block, which are our main examination venues.

Please refer to the Key Stage newsletters that were sent out before the holiday for more information about all the exciting things that happened at LHS last term.

I hope you had a lovely, restful Easter. We are looking forward to welcoming students back to LHS on Monday.

Kind regards

David Ramsden

Headteacher, LHS