

13 May 2021

Dear Student and Parent/Carer

Re: COVID-19 Restrictions

From the 17 May, the government has announced that restrictions to minimise the spread of COVID-19 will be eased as transmission rates, hospitalisation rates and death rates continue to fall nationally. The local picture is also very encouraging and the college has experienced very few positive cases over the past couple of months. I thank you all for the effort that you continue to put into keeping each other safe.

It has been a challenging year in which we have all had to sacrifice some of our freedoms and have been prohibited from doing some of the things that we enjoy and value. However, my thoughts are aligned with those of the government and the new guidance that they have published for schools and college. I am pleased that we are now at the point where we can also begin to ease some of the restrictions in college and rebuild our college community to something that feels more familiar. It has been a strange year for us all and it has shown me how important it is to spend time investing in a community that cares and values each other.

Changing the timetable from its current structure (5 hours per day) does not seem like a sensible change to make. Excluding the two weeks of study leave (wc 24 May and wc 7 June) and the half-term break, there are only four college weeks between now and the final teaching day on Friday 2 July. However, there are some small steps that we can make now. Below is a summary of the changes and we would encourage all students to capitalise on these changes as much as possible.

From 17 May 2021

- Students are no longer required to wear face masks in college. Staff will continue to wear face masks in communal areas.
- Students can book to work in college on their working from home days and before/after college. This should be done through their Head of Alliance.
- Teachers will begin to circulate the classroom throughout the day for very short periods of time to check understanding and progress.
- Students are asked to continue to maintain a 2-metre distance from staff.

From 7 June 2021

In addition to the above:

- Students can be in college whenever they choose during the working day. This is from 7.30am to 5.30pm (5.00pm each Friday). This does not have to be pre-planned or booked.
- Students can work independently or in small groups in the different study areas around the college site.
- Traditional and continental breakfast will be served in the restaurant each day from 8.30am.
- After-college activities will be offered for students to attend. This may include subject specific intervention, subject enrichment activities plus access to the college gym for those that sign-up for a gym induction (details to be confirmed at a later date).

From 21 June 2021 – *the steps below are dependent upon future government advice therefore may be altered where appropriate.*

- 2-metre distancing between staff and students will no longer be required.
- Staff are no longer required to wear a face mask in communal areas.
- Classroom capacity restrictions are removed.
- Teachers are free to move around and circulate the classroom at regular points during the day.

I appreciate that these may feel like small steps, however they are hugely important ones for the college to now take in preparation for the next academic year, where we hope to return to a much more familiar experience.

Please be assured that the following measures remain in place to ensure that staff and students keep each other as safe as possible:

- Anybody with COVID-19 symptoms isolates immediately and gets a PCR test.
- Contact tracing of students, so that close contacts of identified positive cases can be notified to isolate for 10 days.
- Frequent cleaning of surfaces and door handles that are regularly used.
- Consistent and frequent hand washing and sanitising throughout the day.
- Students can still choose to wear a face mask in communal areas and/or lessons if they would prefer.
- Staff and students without symptoms continue to take lateral flow tests twice a week at home and notify the college of their results.

I hope that you understand why we are taking the decision to make these changes now and I hope that these small changes improve the college experience for all students.

If you would like to discuss anything that has been outlined in this letter, please contact the relevant Head of Alliance in the first instance:

- Claire Naylor – Yousafzai and Luther-King – Claire.naylor@elliottthudsoncollege.ac.uk
- David Ellis – Earhart and Hawking – David.ellis@elliottthudsoncollege.ac.uk

Many thanks and my best wishes



Lee Styles
Associate Principal