



6 November 2020

Dear students, parents, and carers

Government Advice: COVID-19

The main symptoms of COVID-19 are:

- **a high temperature** – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- **a new, continuous cough** – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- **a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste** – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

If your child is sent home from school or displays any one of these symptoms at home, they must self-isolate for at least ten days. Anyone else in their household must self-isolate for 14 days from when your child started having the symptoms. The only exception to this is if the child has a negative test and is feeling well.

We do appreciate that the impact of a family having to isolate is significant but it is vital that we adhere to the government guidelines.

After completing a successful first half term, we are keen to build on this and achieve even more over the next six weeks. We are challenging our students to play their part in keeping everyone safe and to show that they are conscientious, considerate and co-operative at all times.

Following the government's announcement of a national lockdown and increases in infection rates over recent weeks locally and nationally, we have decided to initiate a concerted campaign to help students understand the serious situation we are all in and what they can do to keep themselves, their family, their friends and school staff safe. This campaign is starting now with senior leaders and year leaders visiting tutor groups and presenting our plan to make the school as safe as we can whilst continuing with high quality lessons. The plan is summarised below:

1. Importance of staying at home and arranging a test if there are coronavirus symptoms

Students are being reminded of the government advice at the start of this newsletter and to talk to their parents before they come into school if they are showing any of the symptoms to protect their friends, their fellow students and staff.

2. Keeping windows open, increased heating and wearing many layers of clothing

We have obtained updated advice from the NHS and the Department for Education that it is extremely important to maximise ventilation by keeping doors and windows open at all times. This has the dual effect of reducing the likelihood of a student or staff member contracting COVID-19 and also reduces the concentration of the virus that any individual could breathe in. We are following this advice but have considerably increased the level of heating and are also encouraging students to wear as many layers of clothing as possible. These layers can include a base layer or t-shirt underneath their uniform, and a JMHS fleece as well as a JMHS polo shirt and JMHS sweatshirt. If you need any help with purchasing additional uniform so your son or daughter has sufficient layers to wear, please email us at admin@JMHS.hereford.sch.uk. We are also continuing to allow students to wear coats in lessons and would encourage all parents to send students to school wearing a warm winter coat.

3. Everyone on the school site, except those medically exempt, to wear face coverings in communal indoor areas including corridors

Following the imposition of the national lockdown and new regulation put in place by the government with effect from Monday 9 November, all those at JMHS will be required to wear face coverings in corridors and indoor communal areas. Face coverings will not be required in offices, classrooms or in an eating area when sat down and eating.

We recommend that students should bring their own hand sanitiser. This will enable students to sanitise their hands before and after putting on their face covering or removing their face covering. At the end of each lesson teachers will ensure students put on their face covering and sanitise their hands before being released if they are going into a corridor or indoor space.

Students will be required to put on their face covering before entering the dining room. When they sit down to eat their food and after they leave their dining room they will be able to remove their face covering. Students will also be required to wear a face covering if they go to the toilet.

Please could we ask all parents to send students to school with a clean face covering that is suitable for wearing in a formal setting such as a school or office and a small plastic bag, such as a food storage bag, to store the face covering when it is not in use. This will help us keep all members of the school safe. If you could also send a small bottle of hand sanitiser this will be a huge help. For students who forget masks we will supply a new disposable mask for the day. If your son or daughter is medically exempt from wearing a face covering, please could you contact us and let us know as soon as possible?

4. No physical contact rule

Since September we have reminded students of our no physical contact rule which is designed to help students respect each other's personal space and ensure social distancing during the COVID-19 pandemic. Students have respected the rule, but sometimes forget especially during break or lunchtime. We will be giving regular reminders, but if parents and carers could reinforce this at home too, that would be great.

5. Reducing the number of visitors to school

During the national lockdown, we will be accepting visits to school from medical practitioners including our school doctor, nurse and counsellors, but will only accept other visitors when absolutely essential. We will be phoning parents rather than meeting you face to face. Please only come onto school premises if it is absolutely essential and you have a pre-arranged appointment. If you do have a pre-arranged appointment, please wear a face covering unless you are exempt. We will of course be very happy to speak to parents and carers on the phone and will respond to enquiries promptly.

6. No after school clubs, but after school lessons may continue

The government have decided that schools should not offer after school extra-curricular clubs in areas such as sports and the arts unless the main purpose of these clubs is to allow parents to go to work, seek work or attend training. The stated aim for our enrichment programme is to enrich the curriculum and provide students with cultural capital. Therefore, unfortunately we will have to cancel all after school extra-curricular clubs for the remainder of this half term. We hope to resume these clubs in January.

We are continuing with enrichment opportunities and in particular our House Competitions through House Sport in PE lessons, and house challenges and competitions in afternoon tutor time as well as providing opportunities to play sport and take part in some arts activities at lunchtime.

Please note that after school lessons including triple science and languages on Tuesdays, homework club and Year 11 catch up lessons and clubs will continue as now.

7. Students responsibilities in the wider community

All staff are promoting considerate and compliant behaviour from students in the local community. This includes making students aware of the rules in the current lockdown and helping them to respond

positively to the 'hands, space, face' campaign. We are doing this by continuing to remind students of the importance of hand washing and sanitising their hands, reminding them they must wear a face covering when entering a shop or are on public or school transport and to always try to remain two metres distance from others where possible. We are particularly encouraging students to be aware of members of the public when walking to and from school and to give them space. Any help that parents can give in encouraging safe and considerate behaviour would also be greatly appreciated.

Year 11 Practice Exams

We have been most impressed with how hard Year 11 students have worked preparing for their practice exams and how they have conducted themselves in the exams. They have been a credit to themselves, their families and our school. Teachers will be giving feedback over the next few weeks. Year 11 students will have a further full set of Mock Exams in late January and early February.

Self-isolating students

We would like to thank all students, parents and families for co-operating with keeping students at home or collecting them from school when they or a family member are displaying coronavirus symptoms and arranging tests promptly. We have not yet had a positive test result for a member of JMHS, but are aware that this could change in the near future. If we do have a positive test result, we will be required to contact the Department for Education and the Local Area Outbreak Team and then ask close contacts to self-isolate and remain at home for two weeks. We realise that this will be very disappointing for the students and families involved and would like to thank parents and families in advance for your help and co-operation with this.

We are currently asking all teachers to set work via Epraise for students self-isolating, so that they do not miss out on work covered in class. If you have questions about this or are concerned that your child is self-isolating but has not been set work, please could you contact your child's Year Leader at the email address listed below:

Year 7 Mrs Fox: donna.fox@jmhs.hereford.sch.uk Year 10 Mr Bees: anthony.bees@jmhs.hereford.sch.uk
Year 8 Mr Wyatt: dean.wyatt@jmhs.hereford.sch.uk Year 11 Miss Limbrick: chloe.limbrick@jmhs.hereford.sch.uk
Year 9 Miss Newnes: hayley.newnes@jmhs.hereford.sch.uk

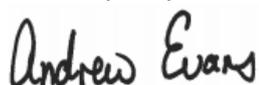
Parental survey

I am keen to receive feedback from students, parents and carers on the quality of education and support we have provided this half term. We will be sending a link to a survey next week to give an opportunity for feedback.

...And finally

We would like to wish all families well during this difficult second national lockdown and encourage you to contact student services or your child's Year Leader if there are matters you wish to discuss.

With my very best wishes



Andrew Evans
Headteacher