



3 December 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 are feeling well.

WHERE A CHILD HAS HAD A TEST, THEY MUST ALWAYS SELF-ISOLATE AT HOME UNTIL NOTIFICATION OF A NEGATIVE TEST IS RECEIVED.

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.

Arrangement for the Faculty Training Afternoon on Monday 7 December

Next Monday we are holding our final Faculty Training Afternoon this term. From 12.30pm teachers work together in their faculty teams (eg English, languages, the arts) to plan the curriculum and improve the consistency and quality of teaching. As part of their work on Friday, they will be compiling summaries for parents of the topics to be covered next term and the key learning for each topic. These summaries will be sent out with the first newsletter of 2021 and posted on the school website.

On this day students will finish the school day between 12.10pm and 12.25pm and be escorted to the bus park by their teachers at the times listed below:

Year 7: 12.10pm

Year 10: 12.20pm

Year 8 & Year 9: 12.15pm

Year 11 & Sixth Form 12.25pm

Students will then walk home or await their bus whilst being supervised by staff. Parents picking students up in cars should arrive after the busses depart at or after 12.45pm.

Next stages for Year 11 with Sixth Form choices

On Friday 20 November 140 of our Year 11 students had a break from their usual GCSE diet and became Sixth Formers for the day experiencing a range of A level lessons as part of our advice and guidance on selecting the right path for themselves post-16. The students enjoyed being immersed in a wide range of A Level experiences from Maths investigations into what differentiation is and why we need to use it, to exploring the role of dreams in challenging cultural taboos in the Gothic writing genre. In Biology students undertook a range of

experiments to investigate cell division, while in German they looked at popular culture and politics to explore new vocabulary and gain an insight into modern Germany. Drama students interpreted an A level set text utilising four different styles including the physical theatre of Berkoff and the Chemists conducted practical experiments into the effect of the mass of reactants on the mass of gas produced. ICT students analysed the uses and impact of AR (Augmented Reality) whilst the Core Maths students looked at the role of estimation using Fermi's method.

Students enjoyed the day and the insight it gave into life as a Sixth Form student at John Masefield. The day will be followed up with 'Futures' discussions with a member of the Sixth Form team over the next four weeks to discuss further their subject choices for Sixth Form. Parents with any questions about life in the Sixth Form are encouraged to contact Mr Hawksworth, our Head of Sixth Form.

Next stages for Year 11 with College Choices and Apprenticeships

On Friday 20 November, a number of our Year 11 students spent the day learning about post-16 opportunities, as well spending time with several of their subject teachers to work in small groups. For many of the students it was the first time that they had carefully examined the different routes available to them after Year 11. Students watched a video produced by Hereford and Ludlow College which showed them the range of courses available at different levels of study, information on how to apply, and they heard feedback from some of the students. Although the video focused on Hereford and Ludlow College, we explained that the courses and processes at other local colleges are broadly similar.

The school's Careers Leader, Mr Elliott, spent time with the students looking at other post-16 opportunities, including apprenticeships. The students then accessed their personal account on the Start careers online system. They entered their own preferences so that the system can guide them over the coming months. We also explained what a college reference is, and the students looked at some examples.

Over the next few weeks our independent Careers Officer, Mrs Rose (who works with us on Tuesdays), will be meeting each of the students who have expressed an interest in applying to a college or in obtaining an apprenticeship. Hereford and Ludlow College (the main Hereford campus and Holme Lacy) is currently advertising Open Events in January and March but please check with college for precise details. If parents or carers have any questions about college applications, please contact Mrs Rose at school.

Arrangements for Year 8 students choosing courses for Year 9 – Year 11

The Year 8 Choices will be completed using a mixture of virtual and in school activities. Students will receive a booklet in January giving full details of the process and the subjects available for them to choose from. There will be presentations posted on the JMHS website available for students and parents to view at home, including subject presentations, details on how the process will work and how to make a good choice. Form tutors will go through these presentations in tutor time.

There will be a dedicated email address set up for any correspondence and a live Teams Chat on Thursday 21 January with Mrs Laidler, who manages the process.

Students will have a one to one discussion with a senior member of staff from Friday 22 January to help them think carefully about the subjects they are choosing. Following this meeting there will be an online form for parents/carers to complete to finalise student subject requests.

Follow up to the parental survey

In additions to the questions discussed in the previous newsletter, there were two further questions where approximately 80% of parents agreed or strongly agreed with the statements made. The action being taken in each of these areas is summarised below.

i. JMHS makes sure its pupils are well behaved

Promoting and securing positive behaviour is vitally important to us at JMHS. We constantly encourage students to be conscientious, considerate and co-operative. Mr Williams (Assistant Headteacher) and Miss Limbrick (Head of Y11) are leading our drive to further improve the good behaviour we currently have at JMHS so that it can

become excellent. They lead our team of Year Leaders in implementing systems that apply to all students and classes in the school, whilst supporting individuals with challenging behaviour to improve through excellent pastoral care and bespoke one to one support.

This term we have started to develop a behaviour system which encourages students to take responsibility through restorative work. Our 'Behaviour Ladder' helps students and teachers to recognise positive behaviour, as well as actions which require intervention. This is applied in all lessons across all year groups and allows students the opportunity to put right their mistakes.

Repeated low level disruption is tackled through weekly behaviour point accumulations, leading to sanctions and parental/carer contact. Students who require a greater amount of support with their behaviour are placed on Pastoral Support Plans which are designed specifically to help them improve their behaviour and learning. Classes where behaviour can be difficult are identified by senior and year leaders for additional monitoring and support, and plans are put into practice to help the class improve their behaviour.

All staff are given regular training on effective behaviour management and on the impact of mental health on behaviour and how we can support good mental health by our pastoral team on training days.

ii. My child has SEND, and the school gives them the support they need to succeed

First and foremost, we strongly believe that students with SEND are supported best when home and school work together. Our SENDCo, Mrs Barker, is currently in the process of writing to the parents/carers of all new starters at JMHS who are included on the SEND register, giving details on how to get in touch with the SEND team. Any parent who is concerned that their child has a SEND issue and is not included on the register is very welcome to contact Mrs Barker to discuss their needs. Examples of actions the SEND office can undertake include getting interim updates from your child's teachers, advising on GP referrals for more complex cases, communicating regularly with staff via internal SEND updates and liaising with the pastoral support team. Some of the Interventions we offer are Fresh Start (a phonics programme for Y7 students who need additional support with reading), rapid reading, handwriting support, chill and chat as well as catch up tutoring for those students who have fallen behind.

Travelling to and from school

We are pleased with the way students are wearing their face coverings and behaving in a considerate way on school buses. As students often walk along country lanes to bus stops in the dark, we would like to stress the importance of wearing bright and where possible fluorescent outer layers to keep them as safe as possible from traffic.

The vast majority walking to and from school are sensible and considerate. A small number of younger students walking home are getting over excited. We are trying to supervise and remind them as they leave school to walk home in a safe and considerate way. However, we have had some reports of a small number stepping into the road without looking or not being considerate to members of the public walking in the opposite direction. If parents could remind students of how important it is to always behave in a safe and considerate way to reinforce this message that would be most helpful.

Headteacher's Chess Challenge

Over the past fortnight during afternoon tutor time, 40 Year 7 students have challenged me to games of chess as part of our house competition. All played well and I have thoroughly enjoyed playing these games. All participants have been awarded at least two house points with those who played particularly well awarded more. Students who played the best games include Georgia Cooper-Lewington, Charlie Walker, Sam Coulter, James Smith, Jamie Owen, Orlagh Galligan-Mallone, Rowan Batchelor, Connor Burch, Lawson Ing, Riley Price, Taylor Selby, Louisa Willis, Poppy Wilkins, Arthur Warner, Alex Iles, Poppy Flattery and Ella Power.

The final scores for each house were:

B7a: 15 house points

H7a: 15 house points

M7a: 11 house points - update

B7b: 40 house points

J7a: 10 house points

M7b: 41 house points

I will give students in older year groups who wish to challenge me the opportunity to do so next term.

Arrangements for the end of term

The final day of the Autumn Term is Friday 18 December. Students will be taught their normal lessons on the school timetable until morning break on this date. From 11.15am they will have an end of term celebration with their form tutors. This will include a chance to watch a special Christmas concert recorded by our Year 11 Arts Prefects. Following this students finish the school day between 12.10pm and 12.25pm and will be escorted to the bus park by their teachers at the times listed below:

Year 7: 12.10pm

Year 10: 12.20pm

Year 8 & Year 9: 12.15pm

Year 11 & Sixth Form 12.25pm

Students will then walk home or await their bus whilst being supervised by staff. Parents picking students up in cars should arrive after the busses depart at or after 12.45pm.

Arrangements for the start of the Spring Term

Students will return to school on Tuesday 5 January. All of the current arrangements to make the school COVID-19 secure including those listed below will continue for the Spring Term:

- Staff and students wearing masks in communal indoor areas and when moving between lessons
- Staff and students sanitising their hands whenever they arrive at or leave a classroom
- Separate year group zones and enhanced cleaning
- Increased ventilation and encouraging students to wear many layers

The good news is that at the moment we believe that we will be able to restart after school clubs including those in sport and the arts within year group bubbles from Monday 11 January 2021.

Events and key dates for the Spring Term

- Monday 4 January 2021: INSET day – no school for students
- Tuesday 5 January 2021: Students return to school
- Thursday 14 January 2021: Year 7 Parents' Evening – Virtual
- Thursday 21 January 2021: Year 8 Choices Evening – Live MS Teams Chat
- Thursday 28 January 2021: Year 12 & Year 13 Parents' Evening – Virtual
- Monday 1 February 2021: Staff Training Afternoon – students depart at 12.10/12.25pm
- Thursday 11 February 2021: Year 8 Parents' Evening - Virtual
- Monday 15 February 2021 – Friday 19 February 2021: Half Term
- Thursday 25 February 2021: Year 10 Parents' Evening - Virtual
- Thursday 4 March 2021: Year 9 Parent' Evening – Virtual
- Tuesday 9 March 2020: Staff Training Afternoon – students depart at 12.10/12.25pm
- Thursday 11 March 2020: Year 11 Parents' Evening – Virtual
- Thursday 1 April 2020: Term ends at 3.15pm

...And finally

I would like to wish all students and parents well for the final fortnight of the Autumn Term.

With my very best wishes



Andrew Evans
Headteacher