



Poynton High School and Performing Arts College

Head Teacher: Mr D. Waugh

Friday 23 October, 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

Thank you once again for your support and understanding this last half term. It has certainly been a very successful, if not highly challenging half term and I hope that you are all able to have a restful, peaceful and safe half term break next week, no matter what level of Covid-restriction you are under where you live.

I hope that you have found our regular updates useful, thank you again for all of your adherence to our new systems and protocols. It has most certainly kept our Covid-incident rate down and we have been able to successfully keep the vast majority of students and staff in school over this last half term.

I hope you find this short letter useful in giving you further information and I also wanted to share with you a newsletter from the Board of Trustees of The TRUE Learning Partnership. As you will know, Poynton High School is a founding member of The TRUE Learning Partnership, a community based, values focussed, cross phased multi academy trust and the support and resource from our trust over this last half term has been amazing. The Board of Trustees wanted to send out a short newsletter giving all in our 5-school partnership an update, I hope you find their newsletter informative and useful.

Year 11 Parents Evening

We held our first ever 'virtual' parents evening last night and feedback seems to be exceptionally positive, some teething problems for a very small number of parents, but overall very positive feedback. We have purchased a new app (School Cloud Parents Evening) for hosting parents evenings with an accompanying on-line appointment booking system.

The whole process seems to have worked very smoothly in the main and a lot of neighbouring schools are now hoping to employ the same system for their own parents evenings over the next half term. We will continue to fine tune the process and will be aiming to host all other parents evenings for the remainder of the academic year 'virtually' using the same platform. Details of how to register and log on will be provided to all families closer to the time of their evenings. The next parents' evening is Year 13 on 4th November 2020.

Covid-Update

As we head into the half term break, I can confirm that over the last 8 weeks of term we have had the following:

- 18 positive cases associated with either our students or our staff; made up of 11 students and 7 staff

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- 25 staff have had to self-isolate due to being 'close contacts' with positive cases
- In total, over the last 8 weeks, I have had to ask 30 Year 7 students to self-isolate, 199 Year 8 students, 225 Year 10 students, 15 Year 12 students and 25 Year 13 students
- In the main, I have been able to close 'small bubbles' however due to various factors have also had to ask all of Year 8 and all of Year 10 to self-isolate. Year 8 are now fully returned and Year 10 return fully after half term.

The decision to ask students to self-isolate is made in conjunction with Cheshire East Public Health, Public Health England and the Department for Education support helpline for staff. Ultimately, the decision to 'close bubbles' is made on a case by case basis and is the result of extensive debate and discussion. The use of 'close contact' and 'close proximity' rules, as per the NHS guidance is a part of the overall 'jigsaw' however other factors also come into play such as the ability to confirm tracing, the ability to ensure individual adherence to the guidelines, the likelihood of community and social time transmission, common surface transmission and the hierarchy of control measures being implemented. I do not make the decision to 'close bubbles' lightly and I am so very grateful for everyone's support and understanding. It is an extremely challenging set of circumstances and we continue to adapt our processes moving forward.

If your son or daughter develops symptoms over half term, please continue to contact us at our e-mail address info@pchs.cheshire.sch.uk. We continue to staff a 'track and trace' service over the half term break and it is vital that we are made aware of all emerging and confirmed cases. Thank you in advance for your engagement with this.

Self-Isolation

I would like to take this opportunity to remind all families that if a student has been asked to self-isolate then they should remain in their home. Self-isolating students should not be out 'in the village' during social times and should adhere to the NHS guidelines for self-isolation, available here: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment/when-to-self-isolate-and-what-to-do/>

Letter from Cheshire East Local Authority

Alongside this letter, and the bulletin from TTLP, is a letter from Cheshire East Local Authority which gives details of what being categorised as 'high risk' means. Please be encouraged to read this and adhere to the guidelines within it. Cheshire East Public Health have been a great help and resource for us over the last 8 weeks and I would like to commend them to you for their hard work, dedication and informative, clear guidance during these challenging times.

Thank you again for all of your support and understanding. I hope that you will be able to get some rest and relaxation this half term break. I very much look forward to supporting our staff and young people in the next half term and wish you all safety and protection in these Covid times.

Yours faithfully

Mr David Waugh
Head Teacher

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