



Weekly Newsletter December 3rd 2021

Hello everybody.

Sadly, we have seen a tightening of covid protocols once again and I would like to begin by thanking you all for your support and understanding at a time when we seem to be heading into some further uncertainty. The reintroduction of the wearing of face masks in classrooms is government guidance designed as a precautionary measure to help mitigate the possible impact of the new variant. We are awaiting guidance in respect of the recent government announcement regarding self-isolation related to the new variant and I will update you as soon as we receive and make sense of it. In the meantime, please continue to observe the covid protocols which are currently in place and which are – as with every week – outlined in the section below.

Covid cases amongst the pupil population in Whitchurch remain at a very low percentage.

Key Covid Messages

Adults who are fully vaccinated and children and young people aged 5 to 17 will be asked to self-isolate until they have received a negative PCR test if someone in their household has symptoms or tests positive for Covid-19. Therefore:

- Your child will need to arrange a PCR test and self-isolate until they receive the test result.
If the test is negative then your child can return to school straight away.
- If negative, then take a Lateral Flow Test every day for 7 days *and...*
- If negative, then take a PCR test on Day 2 and Day 8
- If the test is positive then your child will need to self-isolate for 10 days

Please also be advised that – even though we receive notifications of positive cases daily - the covid positivity rate as a percentage of the school population remains relatively low. Many thanks to all of you for your vigilance and support in helping us to maintain this.

- If your child presents any of the main covid symptoms (new and persistent cough; high temperature; loss/change of sense of taste and/or smell) then they **MUST NOT** attend school. Please inform the school, arrange a PCR test and await results and TTP guidance.
- Close contacts who have been fully vaccinated or **are under 18** will not need to self-isolate but should get PCR tested on Day 2 and Day 8.
- Guidance and direction will now come from TTP rather than the school.
- Please use Lateral Flow Tests twice a week. It is recommended that pupils test themselves on the morning of their first day back.

School Events

Unfortunately, due to the increased uncertainty around the new covid variant, it has proven to be unfeasible for us to hold the annual Christmas Concert as we had originally planned.

In partnership with the Welsh College of Music and Drama we will, however, be performing the concert in the college’s auditorium without a live audience on the date above. The performance will be filmed and made available via a link which we will sent out to all staff and parents. I am confident that the finished product will be a wonderful showcase for the talent and commitment of our young people and their music teachers. The link should be available from December 17th.

We look forward to getting back to live performances in front of an audience as soon as possible in 2022.

Also, advice regarding parents/carers coming into school to attend school events has led us to make the difficult decisions to postpone the Young Playwrights’ Competition and the SRB pantomime. Both of these will be held over until the new year. I will update you on the proposed new dates nearer the time.

Last day of Term

Please see below the arrangements for our structure of the last day of term (Friday December 17th). Pupils will leave school after period 4.

	YEAR	1	BREAK 1	2	BREAK 2	3	LUNCH	3	BREAK 3	4 (end of day)
LOWER	7	8.40-9.40	9.40-9.55	9.55-10.55	10.55-11.10		11.10-11.40	11.40-12.40	12.40-12.55	12.55-1.00
	8 & 9					11.10-12.10	12.10-12.40	12.55-1.05		
UPPER	10 & 12	8.40-9.40	9.40-9.55	9.55-10.55	10.55-11.10		11.10-11.40	11.40-12.40	12.40-12.55	12.55-1.00
	11 & 13					11.10-12.10	12.10-12.40	12.55-1.05		

General

- Interim reports have been published on the SIMs app for parents of students in years 10 and 12.
- Yr 11 Pre- Public Exam individual timetables for the next two weeks have now been sent to all Yr 11 students and parents / carers via e-mail. Please help us to emphasise the importance of these exams. Pupils must attend in full school uniform and will need to wear face masks during the exams.

- Congratulations to the Senior 1st XV rugby team in reaching the U18 schools and colleges bowl cup final. We will be playing Coleg Llandrillo in the Principality Stadium on Wednesday December 8th. Kick off will be at 1.00 p.m. Spectators are welcome. Enter via Gate 3 on Westgate St and wear a mask the entire time you are in the stadium. Once you leave, you will not be allowed to re-enter. The bigger the crowd to cheer on the boys the better. Well done and good luck to the team!
- UCAS forms need to be completed as soon as possible – Year 13 students need to check that their forms have not been returned due to errors that need correcting.
- GCE (A2) certificates for students who have now left will be available for collection on Wednesday 15th December – further details about timings will be placed on our website and e-mailed to the parents / students.

- Wellbeing resources to help students cope with exams and the pressure associated with them and also study skills tutorial videos, are available on the school's website via this link

<https://www.whitchurchhs.wales/Students/Wellbeing/index.html>

This area of the website is helpful for both students and parents; we recommend you take some time to look at what is there and click on the many associated links down the page.

- Several colleagues have bravely attempted Movember again this year to increase awareness of men's health and raise money for prostate cancer. Last year they raised £800 for the charity and would like to beat that this year if possible. If you would like to donate to this worthy cause, please go to the just giving page below. Many thanks for any contributions; I will let you know how much they raise.

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/whitchurchhs>

Have a peaceful and enjoyable weekend.

Kind regards,



Mark Powell