



Newent Community School and Sixth Form Centre

Striving for Excellence

Principal • Mr Alan Johnson

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16th October, 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

Just one more week to go until your sons and daughters can have a well earned rest over half term. I have been really impressed by how well our students and staff have coped with what is an undoubtedly challenging time for all of us, including you. I am proud of how we have all pulled together and how we continue to draw on the strength of our wonderful community to keep doing our best to support each other. Next stop Christmas!

However, to help us get there safely please remember that should your child develop any of the following symptoms please get them tested and contact the school immediately.

1. A high temperature: any new high temperature where your child feels hot to touch on their chest or back (you do not need to measure the temperature);
2. A new continuous cough: coughing a lot for more than an hour, or three or more coughing episodes in 24 hours;
3. A loss of, or change in, sense of smell or taste: a noticeable loss of smell or taste or things smell and taste different to normal.

If you receive a positive test result outside of school hours, please telephone **07498717490** as soon as possible.

You will be aware that Education Secretary Gavin Williamson has announced a three-week delay to the start of next summer's A-levels, and GCSEs, alongside the requirement for schools to hold mock examinations in controlled conditions. The last comment did make me pause, as we always hold rigorous mock exams with strict supervision provided by external invigilators. However, I hope it will offer some measure of comfort to re-state that we will continue to offer this alongside robust marking and grading.

The summer exam series will start on 7 June and end on 2 July for almost all A levels and GCSEs. We will adapt to any future changes as they are announced.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/students-to-be-given-more-time-to-prepare-for-2021-exams>

Attached with this weeks' letter we have also issued key dates for exams, school reports and Parent's Evenings but please note we may need to change some of these dates nearer the time as we receive more announcements from Government but we will keep you updated.

Although I am very thankful that we have been able to keep our school fully open for all students since September, and I am incredibly grateful to all of you for supporting our new ways of working, there are still two issues that I really need your help with. Both of these concerns involve school transport.

Yesterday when I was checking that our students were wearing face coverings on their journey home, I encountered two children who had none. Although I supplied both boys with a disposable face covering for the journey home, I would ask that parents and carers check that their children are ready for school in these challenging times. No longer is it enough just to have a pen, pencil and ruler, if they are travelling by bus to school, all students should be wearing an appropriate face covering unless they have a medical condition that prevents them doing so.

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The second concern is again one that potentially compromises student safety on the journey to and from school. Only students who have purchased one of our Mega Rider bus passes are able to travel on a Stagecoach dedicated route. In addition, these bus passes are allocated to a particular route eg 831, 832 etc. There is no capacity for young people to pick and choose which routes they travel on. When challenged the bus and coach companies inform me their drivers are reluctant to leave a child by the roadside, especially as the mornings get darker. Although I understand this concern, it is not an issue that would arise if young people stuck to their allocated bus. I have asked the bus company to take a firmer stance with students attempting to board the wrong bus and I ask that you too reinforce this expectation.

Newent School Book Club

Thank you to everyone who has ordered books already. If you want to take a look there are only 7 days left to browse the titles available and get your order in. Just go to:

<http://schools.scholastic.co.uk/newent-community/digital-book-club>

Every £1 you spend will earn 20p for our school in Scholastic Rewards.
Please place your order online by Friday 23rd October.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alan Johnson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Alan Johnson
Principal

