

28th May, 2021



Dear Parent/Carer

Parental Update 61

200 and counting! Thank you to everyone who's completed the short questionnaire we've set up to ask your views about arrangements for next year. I'll be analysing the results shortly after half-term, so if you'd like to have your say, please do so before we return to school – you can find the form [here](#).

Parent Governor election

Thank you too if you voted in the recent Parent Governor election! We had over 100 votes, and after they were counted, **Mr Paul Cliff** was duly elected to serve as a Governor for four years. I'm sure you'd want to join me in congratulating Mr Cliff on his election, and in sending him every best wish as he takes up his new role.

Sincere thanks too to the other candidates who put themselves forward for election. I'm very grateful for the support so many parents so readily show for the work we do here – contributing to surveys, standing for the Governing Body, voting in Elections – thank you! Strong parental support is one of the things that makes it such a privilege to lead this amazing community.

Goodbye...

Today we bid farewell to our Year 11 and Year 13 students. Well, not quite: both year-groups still have some assessments after half-term, and we're hopeful we may be able to arrange at least a Year 11 Leavers' Service during the week beginning Monday 21st June (when, potentially, all restrictions will be lifted).

I have to say that it's been a delight to educate both year-groups over the last 5 or 7 years. At various stages (including quite recently) I've had the pleasure of teaching some of the groups myself, and I've never failed to be impressed by their maturity and selflessness – something that their pastoral leaders (particularly Heads of Year Mr Lightfoot and Mrs Wyke, and Director of Sixth Form Mr Lawton) have also remarked on over the years. They leave with our best wishes for wherever their future paths may take them, and with a simple request – *please keep in touch!* We are always interested to know how our former students get on in the world!

Please keep testing!

As a resident of (recently-promoted) Bolton I can certainly testify how important it is that everyone who's entitled to be vaccinated gets vaccinated; and that everyone keeps up with Lateral Flow Testing too. If a test result comes back positive over the holidays, it's very important that you let us know through [this address](#) so that, if necessary, we can consider whether anyone in the school community needs to self-isolate.

It's obviously important that we don't 'drop our guard' in what seems to be the final stages of our battle with this disruptive virus. Of course, we can't afford to do so – as evidenced by the positive result we had from a Year 8 boy's Polymerase Chain Reaction ('PCR') test this week. 67 boys are having to self-isolate until the latter stages of the half-term break as a consequence, the first such self-

isolations this term). Please do keep testing, and if your son has any of the Covid symptoms please do not send him into school – the safety of our school community relies on everyone’s vigilance at this time.

Letter from the City Council

Steve Reddy (Liverpool’s Director of Children’s Services) and Matt Ashton (Director of Public Health) have jointly written a letter for parents at the end of this half-term; it is appended to this *Update*.

Key Stage 3 Assessments

We’re naturally conscious that since March 2020, we’ve lost a great deal of teaching time. Our subject teams have therefore spent some time looking at what students are taught each year, and working out which parts of it are most important – *ie*, which parts students need most for their learning next year. We’re keen to make sure as many boys don’t fall any further behind because they can’t access next year’s work in September.

We’ve arranged an ‘Assessment Fortnight’ for later next month where each subject will test the boys to check they are on top of what they need to know. The assessments have been written so that most students will be able to score highly, so we can celebrate what they have learnt; but where ‘gaps’ do emerge, we’ll make sure there’s support in place so that they can be filled. In the jargon, the assessments are *diagnostic* not *summative*: we’re looking to find gaps rather than provide a traditional end-of-year exam to say how well each student is doing in each subject.

A separate letter with more details (including an assessment timetable, and an indication of what the student needs to know for each subject) is going home today for students in each year-group. If you’d like to know any more, please get in touch with Dr Manwaring (who oversees Teaching and Learning) through [this address](#).

...and Year 10 too

Students in Year 10 will doubtless be happy to learn they aren’t being left out! They will be tested too before the end of term, although the tests are different from those in Key Stage 3 (*ie* they’re not entirely ‘diagnostic’). Again, a letter has been sent home with further details; and again, Dr Manwaring is more than happy to answer any questions you may have through [this address](#).

All students (in Years 7, 8, 9 and 10) could benefit from looking at our dedicated Revision Area, which can be found [here](#).

Dr Silverstone’s section

Dr Silverstone, our Director of Pastoral Care, writes:

“For the final safeguarding update of this half term, I’d like to inform you of a new development from CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services). CAMHS is a collection of NHS and voluntary sector organisations that provide a range of mental health support for children, young people and their families. As well as offering information, advice and guidance, assessment, diagnosis, treatment and intervention for young people who are experiencing problems with their emotions, behaviour or mental health, these partners also promote ways to develop positive mental health, including building resilience and training. This support covers a range of mental health difficulties including depression, eating disorders, self-harm, abuse, violence or anger, bipolar, schizophrenia and anxiety among many other difficulties.

“A new online resource has been launched to help children, young people, parents and professionals to make referrals into get support from Liverpool CAMHS. The online Liverpool CAMHS Platform is designed to make the process of accessing the right mental health services much easier. The new platform allows just one referral form linking a wide range of mental health services across Liverpool, who work in partnership together. Previously, the referral process has been long, complicated and difficult to navigate. It is the first time mental health services have been integrated in this way in the UK. As well as allowing parents to refer their children to CAMHS, the platform also provides a range of advice and guidance resources. You can find the platform [here](#).”

Letters home from school

Do you need letters from school, such as this weekly *Update*, in a different format, such as large print, or Braille? Would it be helpful to have them in a different language? If so, do please get in touch with me (through [this address](#)) and we'll do whatever we can to help.

Finally...

I know that many of my colleagues, and a number of students (especially those in Years 11 and 13), are ready for a break. That's nothing to be ashamed of – even God needed to rest on the seventh day after His work of creation!

My best wishes, therefore, to all St Margaret's families for whatever time you're able to take for rest and relaxation over the next few days. But even as we do so, please spare a thought (and perhaps a prayer) for all those who have Coronavirus at this time (such as our student in Year 8), and all those whose plans may have now been frustrated by the need to self-isolate.

We'll be in touch again on the first Friday back.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S Brierley', enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

Stephen Brierley
Principal.

25th May 2021



Liverpool
City Council

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we approach half term it is important that everyone is aware that although Liverpool is opening up, we still need to be very cautious about the risk of Covid-19, especially in light of the new variant. There are things you still need to do to help reduce the risk of you and anyone you live with getting ill with COVID-19:

- wash your hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds;
- use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available;
- wash your hands as soon as you get home;
- cover your mouth & nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze; and
- put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards.

Vaccinations

Public Health are strongly urging everybody eligible for the vaccine in Liverpool who hasn't had their vaccine yet to book ASAP!

Booking is easy, please go to <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/book-coronavirus-vaccination/> or phone 119 free of charge.

Foreign travel

We are still being advised against all non-essential international travel to most countries and territories. You should check the country page for your destination if you do have to travel: www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice

Return to school

Testing

Please continue to get tested twice per week using your home testing kits which are available for anyone without symptoms. In particular could you please ensure that secondary age pupils get tested before returning to school after the half term break.

<https://liverpool.gov.uk/smarttesting>

Face coverings

We are still asking that you continue to wear face coverings when dropping off and picking up your children at school due to concerns about the inability to socially distance at some locations.

Please stay safe and thank you for your continued support.

Yours faithfully

Matt Ashton

Director of Public Health, Liverpool

Steve Reddy

Director of Children's Services, Liverpool



This guidance is available in a range of alternate languages: shorturl.at/zHJK6

If you have any of the main symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19), get a PCR test as soon as possible. Stay at home until you get the result. The main symptoms of coronavirus 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

People who are sick with coronavirus may have other flu like symptoms such as:

- body aches;
- persistent headaches;
- sore throat; tiredness;
- shortness of breath;
- nausea; or
- diarrhoea.

If you don't have any of the main symptoms of coronavirus, you don't need to isolate until you get your result, however you do need to continue to take the usual measures to protect yourself and others from illness.

People with symptoms can get a test here or call 119:

<https://liverpool.gov.uk/communities-and-safety/emergency-planning/coronavirus/how-to-get-tested/tests-for-people-with-symptoms/>

People without symptoms can access our community testing sites here:

<https://liverpool.gov.uk/smarttesting>

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