



October 21st 2020

Dear Parents & Carers,

As Half Term approaches, please find below important information:

- Half Term Arrangements & COVID Guidance
- Uniform reminder for after Half Term
- Road Safety
- Social Media Use

Half Term Arrangements

School will be closed to all students on Friday October 23rd and work will be set remotely for all classes.

On Monday November 2nd, school will be closed to years 7 & 11. We will be open as normal to all other year groups.

Please remind your children that during these days and for the remainder of half term, we are in an area of High Risk for COVID-19. You will find attached a simple guide to the local restrictions. It is really important that students follow these throughout half term, including the additional school closure days.

I also attach a safer nights letter produced in partnership with West Midlands Police.

Uniform Reminder – No Hoodies from Half Term!

From Half Term, **all students** will be asked to wear a **school jumper** as their extra layer for PE. In years 9, 10 and 11, students wishing to wear an extra layer over their shirt and under their blazer may only wear a school jumper. On days when classrooms are particularly cold, especially with the need for ventilation, students in all year groups may also wear a coat over their blazer.

We know that many students in years 10 and 11 in particular may have outgrown their school jumper. If the financial burden of a new jumper is an issue, please contact us as we are able to support with pre-loved jumpers if needed.

On PE days, students are asked to wear either a **pair of joggers** over their shorts (preferably blue, grey or black), or a pair of **leggings under their shorts**. Leggings on their own are not appropriate PE Kit.

Facial piercings, brightly coloured hair/braids or any patterned shavings in hair /eyebrows are not accepted. Our uniform policy is clear that students are allowed one small pair of earrings only. Students with facial piercings or additional earrings will be required to remove these. Please remind your child not to take action over Half Term that will cause an issue on returning to school!



Road Safety

I would be grateful for your support discussing road safety with your child. Recently, we have seen an increase in students crossing the Bristol Road dangerously or walking on the wrong side of the railings when leaving school. The risks are huge as I am sure you are aware. We are giving regular reminders to students. Your assistance in discussing this with them would be appreciated.

Belton Grove remains a hotspot area for road safety : if you drop off or pick up your child, please avoid using Belton Grove. We recommend Morrisons' Car Park or McDonalds Car Park as safe alternatives.

Social Media Use

We had a really helpful discussion at our recent Parent Carer Forum about the challenges of Social Media Use. While all of us are having to limit social contact with friends and family, social media can be a lifeline. However, it is worrying to see how often some of our young people are resorting to completely inappropriate social media use: we have picked up incidents in school caused by verbal abuse, threats, vile comments and violent images being distributed.

Parents and carers shared with us their strategies for checking phone use and talking regularly with their children about how they are using social media. If you are concerned about messages you see on your child's phone, we would value your assistance in letting us know details so that together, we can work with individual students and groups of students who are engaging in inappropriate social media activity.

This has been an incredibly challenging half term and I know that the situation is causing huge stresses and strains for everyone in our school community. Thank you for continued messages of appreciation from parents, carers and students - these have made a real difference to staff, who are working tremendously hard in these extraordinary times.

Wishing you and yours a safe, healthy and peaceful Half Term,

Headteacher



VERY HIGH



HIGH

LOCAL COVID ALERT LEVEL

MEDIUM

HIGH

Social Contact



1 household / bubble indoors. Rule of six outdoors.

Weddings and Funerals



Up to 15 guests for weddings and up to 30 guests for funerals. 15 for receptions, wakes and related ceremonies.

Overnight Stays



Overnight stays permitted subject to social contact rules.

Working from home guidance



Work from home where possible.

Shopping and Retail



Open.

Leisure and gyms



Open.

Hospitality



Open with some restrictions including 10pm closing time and table-service only.

Entertainment and tourist attractions



Open, except nightclubs and adult entertainment.

Education



Schools, FE colleges open. Universities must reflect wider restrictions.

Healthcare Services



Open.

Residential Care



Closed to external visitors other than in exceptional circumstances.

Travel and Transport



May continue to travel to open venues, but reduce number of journeys where possible. Avoid travel into Local COVID Alert Level Very High areas where possible.

Sporting Activity



Organised sport / licensed physical activity allowed in outdoor settings. Indoor organised sport must follow social contact rules (other than youth or disabled sport).

Worship



Open, subject to social contact rules.

Childcare



Registered and wraparound childcare. Supervised activities permitted in private homes. Children's groups permitted. Childcare bubbles for under 14s.

Youth Clubs and Activities



Permitted.

There are three simple actions we must all do to keep on protecting each other:



Wash hands
keep washing your hands regularly



Cover face
wear a face covering in enclosed spaces



Make space
stay at least 2 metres apart - or 1 metre with a face covering or other precautions

For more information and detailed guidance visit:
gov.uk/coronavirus



Dear Parents/Carers and Students,

HAPPY, SAFE HALLOWEEN/BONFIRE NIGHT – REMINDER FROM WEST MIDLANDS POLICE

With the darker nights fast approaching, it is important that students are reminded what we, as a school community, expect of them in terms of behaviour.

Parents/carers and students should already be aware that as part of our safeguarding arrangements, the school has a two-way information sharing agreement in place with West Midlands Police, and we are active members of the local Police & Schools Panel. This joint-approach helps us to intervene early to prevent and reduce crime and anti-social behaviour involving our students, and provide support and up-to-date safety messages.

Sadly, this year's Halloween, Bonfire night and the half term break will look very different due to COVID-19, so please be aware of the legislation and rules in place linked to this. Remember it is now a legal requirement to wear a mask on all public transport and within communal areas such as shops, cafes, restaurants and bars and we must maintain social distancing, ensure we abide by the the rule of six, and the bespoke rules for Birmingham regarding entering other people's homes: https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/coronavirus_advice | <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

In partnership with the police, we would also like to remind our students about the following:-

- **Anti-social behaviour:** Halloween can be a scary time for people who don't like surprises or callers at their door. Think about how your actions and behaviour affect others; elderly and vulnerable people may be frightened by 'trick or treat' so look out for signs in windows that people do not want callers at their door.
- **Personal Safety:**
 - Be aware of your surroundings, take care of friends and family members and keep valuables such as phones out of public view whenever possible.
 - Don't drink alcohol, take illegal drugs or unknown substances; they can have a big impact on your health and safety, behaviour and your ability to do well at school and enjoy other interests and activities. They can also be addictive and have unpredictable side effects, including sudden death!
 - West Midlands Fire Service recommends that you go to an organised display; it's the smart way to stay safe. You'll see a lot more fireworks and it's a lot cheaper. Information about firework safety is available at www.saferfireworks.com
- **Weapons in public places:** carrying a knife will get you a criminal record which can have life-long effects on travel and job prospects. Those who carry knives are also much more likely to be injured by them.
- **Off-road bikes:** These can only be ridden on private land with the landowner's permission. Don't risk your life and future prospects by illegally riding these on the road.
- **Remember the company you keep:** if your friend breaks the law, you may also be held responsible for that crime – even if you weren't the one directly responsible.

Yours sincerely

Emma Leaman
Headteacher
Colmers School & Sixth Form College

Mat Shaer
Chief Superintendent - East NPU
West Midlands Police

Stephen Graham
Chief Superintendent - West NPU
West Midlands Police