



18th March 2022

Dear Parent/Guardian,

As we step towards Easter and begin to move to pre-COVID practices, I want to make you aware of some issues that require parental support and attention. You will be aware from media reports that on the 11th March 2022, the Minister of Education made an announcement regarding changes to DENI guidance on the use of face-coverings in post primary schools.

In line with the ministerial announcement, the Sperrin College community will move to 'cautiously transition' to pre-COVID practices and procedures within our school. The document attached details the main changes which will take effect from Monday 21st March 2022 and will be reviewed at the end of April. Parents are advised to discuss these changes with their children prior to returning to school on Monday. There are however a few other matters that need to be improved upon which the school will address across the course of the remainder of the Spring and Summer term.

These are:

PUPIL ATTENDANCE LEVELS

Parents will know that there is a direct correlation between high levels of pupil attendance and high academic outcomes. Daily school attendance enables pupils to have continuity in learning and teaching and effective homework practice. Consistent routines of bedtime and start to the day are important as these daily practices support positive mental well-being in young people and are vital in building resilience.

WORK ETHIC AND STANDARDS IN WORK

It has been almost a year since we have returned to face-to-face teaching, but for a significant number of pupils there have been periods of ongoing disruption. As such, standards of work, meeting deadlines for coursework and homework have not yet returned to pre-COVID levels. This includes handwriting and presentation standards. This is an area that will certainly impact on performance both within internal and external examinations and I urge parents/guardians to support and encourage pupils as they improve in this regard.

BEHAVIOUR FOR LEARNING

Sperrin College pupils are expected to adhere to high levels of behavioural standards both within the classroom and beyond, in-line with the Code of Conduct. Behaviour that falls short of the standards will result in application of the school's disciplinary procedures.

UNIFORM STANDARDS

Parents are reminded that all pupils are required to present to school in-line with the uniform code. Hair colourants and piercings are not permitted. Pupils are not permitted to wear additional garments to school beyond a plain (no logos) black or navy coat. As the summer term commences (After Easter) the school jumper is optional.

I would also urge parents/guardians to ensure that **all items of pupil uniform** (including PE kit) are **clearly labelled** with your child's name.

SITE SAFETY

In the February half-term communication parents were advised that they were **not permitted to drop off/pick-up their children at the front or side of the school building** due to issues with pupil safety. Unfortunately, there are still a number of parents/grandparents engaging in this. This is causing a serious issue with buses and taxis in the morning but particularly in the afternoon. Parents and grandparents should **drop their child off or pick-up at the car park only**. Given the continuous growth

of the school population car users are reminded to exercise extreme caution on the school avenue, adhere to the speed limit and take cognisance of everyone exiting the school site.

OTHER ISSUES

UKRAINIAN HUMANITARIAN APPEAL

We have all been very moved by the extent of the growing humanitarian crisis as a result of the ongoing conflict in Ukraine. In conjunction with Habitat for Humanity with whom the school have a long-standing relationship with we are running a **sponsored walk on Wednesday 30th March 2022**. This will be a non-uniform day. Pupils will receive their sponsorship cards in the week beginning 21st March 2022 and are asked to give what you can to this appeal. Thank You.

REMINDER OF END OF TERM DATES

Detailed below are several key days for the remainder of this term and term three for your reference:

DETAIL	DATE
Year 11 Mock Examinations	Monday 21 st - Friday 25 th March (inclusive) Wednesday 23 rd March 2022 - Home Study Day for Year 11
Easter Holidays KS3 ONLY	Monday 11 th April - Friday 22 nd April 2022
Easter School (Compulsory for Years 11-14)	Monday 11 th April - Wednesday 13 th April 2022
Easter Holidays KS4 and KS5	Thursday 14 th April - Friday 22 nd April 2022
All Pupils Return Term 3	Monday 25 th April 2022
Bank Holiday	2 nd May 2022 - School Closed
Staff Development Day 4	3 rd May 2022 - <i>No pupils required in school</i>
Staff Development Day 5	Wednesday 1 st June - <i>No pupils required in school</i>
Bank Holiday	Thursday 2 nd June - School Closed
Public Holiday-Queen's Jubilee	Friday 3 rd June - School Closed
Last Day of Term	Thursday 30 th June 2022 - <i>12 noon finish</i>

Once again, I want to thank you for your support.

Yours Sincerely



B A Heron

Principal



SPERRIN
INTEGRATED COLLEGE

COVID-19 MITIGATIONS UPDATE 18TH MARCH 2022

FROM: 21st March 2022-30th April 2022

CONTEXT:

Parents and Guardians will be aware that on Friday 11th March 2022 the Minister of Education issued a statement regarding guidance on the use of face coverings by post-primary pupils within schools.

Face coverings formed part of the suite of in-school mitigations Sperrin College used to help alleviate the risks of virus transmission. Data from the PHA and our own pupil case numbers show a sustained decline in reported cases of COVID-19 within our school community.

A review has been conducted and in line with the ministerial announcement, Sperrin College is moving to 'cautiously transition' to pre-COVID practices and procedures within our school community.

From 21st March until 30th April 2022 detailed below are the main points for parents and guardians to be aware of:

Changes to Day-to-day operational procedures:

1. Face-coverings are no longer recommended in classrooms. (If any pupil wishes to wear a face-covering this is acceptable)
2. Rigorous cleaning routines between classes is no longer required, instead this is at the teacher's discretion. This includes cleaning of computers.
3. Face-coverings are encouraged in the canteen queue.
4. Group and teamwork are encouraged (without limitation on numbers).
5. Whole School Assemblies will revert to being 'in-person': Tuesdays for Junior School (KS3) and Wednesday for Senior School (KS4/5) in the Assembly Hall.
6. Educational visits will be planned in line with the school's educational visits policy.
7. Parental face to face meetings can be organised as required.

Procedures that WILL NOT change:

1. Face-coverings on school and public transport.
2. Separate entrances for KS3 and KS4/5.
3. Hand-washing requirement prior to entering the building.
4. Separate toilet use and specific toilet facility use for Year Groups.
5. Separate dinner time entry and exit.
6. Break-time service will not yet resume at 11.00, however, pupils can use the canteen area for recreational use.
7. Ventilation in rooms.

Review:

Parents and Guardians are to note that there is a balance of relative risk associated with these changes and COVID-19 continues to circulate in the wider community. For this reason, the school will keep these changes under review and will continue to monitor daily our COVID case numbers.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "B. A. Heron".

B A Heron

Principal