



# Our Lady's Catholic College

*Learn, Live, Love together in a caring Catholic community*

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11<sup>th</sup> September 2020

Dear Parents / Carers,

## Welcome

Thank you for your support during our staggered start to the school year. All year groups are now back and it has been wonderful to see them again after such a long time. A special welcome to our new Year 7 pupils who, despite not being able to visit school as part of transition, have settled well and are quickly getting used to their new school environment.

Sadly we have been dealing with the loss of Mr Bates, our Head of RE, who died suddenly during the summer holidays. All year groups that knew him are having a Mass of thanksgiving as a celebration of his life. You will probably have heard many wonderful things about him from your children, or have treasured memories of your own of him. He was an outstanding teacher; principled and inspiring leader; and wonderful friend and colleague. Our whole community will miss him dreadfully and we are working towards a lasting legacy for him in school.

## Covid19 Arrangements

Many thanks for your support with our new arrangements. All pupils in Year 7-10 should have brought home a checklist of expectations around keeping everyone safe. Please talk this through with them. The checklist is also on the website for you to see. We know the situation is not ideal and we are constantly reviewing our risk assessment but I am pleased with how pupils have responded to the limitation of movement and new routines. Please read some important information below:

### Masks

Please contact your child's PSO if you wish your child to wear a mask at school. We need confirmation that you will supply a new disposable mask daily or wash a reusable mask each night. We also need to know that you have trained your child how to use a mask properly. Snoods, bandanas or scarves will not be allowed to be used as masks in school.

Please ensure your child has a mask and wears it if travelling to school on public transport.

### Start times

To reduce contact between year bubbles they all have a different starting time. If at all possible your child should not arrive before that time. If they need to arrive earlier please contact their PSO to let them know.

### Illness

Please keep your child at home, and inform school, if your child shows symptoms of Covid19, listed below.

- **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

### School Closure

Whilst we hope that this will not be necessary, in the case of partial or full closure work will be set on Microsoft Teams. Pupils will be taught how to use this next week in lessons. There are parental help videos on our website to support you. If in this situation your child would not have access to a smart device or laptop and/or WiFi please contact their PSO to let them know so we can make alternative arrangements.

### Uniform

Our Lady's has a very smart uniform and we are very proud of the way each child looks. We are grateful for your support in ensuring they wear their uniform correctly. Please check on the website for uniform expectations, including information about haircuts and piercings. From Monday if pupils are wearing skirts that do not reach their knee they will be given a skirt ban and expected to wear trousers until January. This includes pupils who roll their skirts over to shorten them, even though the skirt is long enough when worn correctly. I also want to make you aware that you do not have to buy all items from the uniform shop as long as they meet school uniform requirements, shirts, skirts and trousers can be bought from any shop.

### Cashless Catering System

Thank you for your patience regarding the delay in getting the cashless system up and running, despite our very best efforts we have been met with a number of technical problems from the side of the company we have contracted to provide the service.

There is a continuing issue regarding them being able to access the Year 7 data therefore we currently are unable to set up parent payment portal or student pre-order accounts for this year group, the company are working on a way to fix this. For the time being free school meal students in Year 7 can pre-order in school using the paper forms and we ask that all other Year 7 students continue to bring a packed lunch. We are hopeful that this can be resolved by the end of next week.

For other year groups we now have the necessary log in information to allow each student to set up their own pre-order account. We shall be giving each student their unique code and the website address on Tuesday morning and ask that they all set up their accounts ready for the following day (Wednesday 16th September). The cut off time for pre ordering for each day is 8.30am. The system allows (dependant on funds) for students to pre-order up to two weeks in advance, we strongly encourage them to do this if possible. Free school meal students have this added to their accounts automatically so that they can use their FSM allocated funds for their lunch.

The SwiftOrder website is currently not mobile friendly – the company are working on a version which will be – so for the time being the students will need to order online using a PC, tablet or laptop.

A reminder also that the canteen is not serving any food in the morning or at break time so please ensure that you send your child with any additional snacks that they might require during the day. As

water fountains cannot be used at this current time it is also crucial that students bring their own filled water bottles to ensure they are hydrated throughout the day.

### **Parking**

As we have students leaving school at different times via different exits we need to ensure this is done as safely as possible. We do have concerns about the number of cars entering the bus bay to collect students – this area is a no parking zone and the number of cars and pedestrians in this small area is a health and safety risk. If you wish to collect your child from school in a vehicle please meet them at the back of school on Lune Street or across Ryelands Park in the public car park that you can access from Torrisholme Road.

### **Parental Portal**

To access the portal please go to our school website at <https://www.olcc.lancs.sch.uk> and select parental portal from the communications section in the menu. **If you haven't already checked your personal data on our Parental Portal please do so. You can also keep up-to-date with school by looking at our website, our Facebook page and our twitter feed, which is Headteacher OLCC**

### **Wellbeing in school.**

**We** achieved the **Wellbeing award for Schools** just after lock down. This year we will continue to work **with Lancashire MIND** to do all we can to educate our pupils about how to stay well physically and mentally. **You will find a mental health Continuum in pupil planners. We have designed this to help pupils recognise early signs of a problem and it has links to websites that they may find useful. We also have a parental booklet which we are giving out at parents' evenings, a copy of which you can find on our website.**

### **Next half term**

We will finish for half term on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> October and return to school on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> November. It will be a week A. All term dates are in your child's planner and on the website for future reference. Please be aware that we will not be responding to Facebook messages during holidays.

Thank you for all your support so far, we look forward to continuing working with you and your family this academic year.

Yours sincerely,



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Mrs H Seddon

Headteacher