

Friday 16th July 2021

Dear parent or carer,

Given the year we've had I'm sure you would forgive me if I shared with you that I'm very pleased that this week is the last week of school here at Wapping High but in fact, rather than feel thankful it's coming to a close, I can't help feeling very proud of what we've still managed to achieve together this year.

My genuine thanks go to students, staff and governors at the school who have been amazing and have constantly refused to let Covid stand in the way of learning and achievement here.

This determination and positive thinking has also led to the design of a summer school this year which involves a large number of staff running a wide range of activities. Ms Robinson is taking the lead over the two-week period at the beginning of August and Ms Sorba provided the original designs. A huge thank you to both colleagues who's planning and hard work will make a real difference to the students who attend.

Summer School

As mentioned above, you probably know the Government has provided funding for summer schools around the country but I am determined, regardless of future sources of funding, to make sure we run a summer school every year from now on.

The summer school is a great opportunity for new Year 7s who are joining us in September to meet each other and their teachers and have fun at the school in the summer weeks which I'm certain will make joining their secondary school a much more enjoyable experience.

In the last Parent Bulletin, I also mentioned that we are again running the annual Festival of Code here at the school at the same time as our new summer school so obviously the site will be buzzing with activity in the last week of July and the first week of August.. Exciting times!

Thanks go to Dr Comley, our Chair of Governors, for putting this amazing and popular annual event on again at the school.

If you'd like to know more about the summer school, or our Festival of Code, then please look at the last Parent Bulletin on the school's website or contact the school in the usual way.

Covid School return from Mr Raw

Test & Trace: Saturday 17th July - Sunday 18th July

The school will be assisting the NHS with Test & Trace for the first two days of the summer holiday only; this is in response to the announcement made on July 6th whereby the NHS will take over the responsibility of contacting those close contacts identified by persons infected with the virus. This is in line with the measures outlined in Step 4 which will come into place on July 19th.

Therefore, any positive test results via either Lateral Flow (LFT) or PCR should be forwarded to the school on the designated email address covidtesting@wappinghigh.org as well as uploaded to the NHS Covid app if taken on either the **17th or 18th July**.

During this two day period, the email will be checked up until **12:00pm lunchtime** and every effort will be made to identify close contacts of any individuals infected with COVID-19. From there, families of those close contacts will be informed that their child must self-isolate for the requisite number of days from when they were last in the presence of an infected individual.

It is important to communicate that a negative result from an LFT within the 10 day isolation period does not currently mean that the isolation can end early. However, I would urge you to update yourself with any guidance to come out in the wake of restrictions easing on July 19th and all information in this letter is correct at the time of writing.

Please note that from **Monday 19th July**, any positive cases of COVID-19 should be reported to the NHS only and not the school. From this date, the NHS will have sole responsibility for Track & Trace.

ATS (Asymptomatic Testing Site) and Staggered Start

The return of students in September will also see the re-introduction of the ATS (Asymptomatic Testing Site) at Wapping High School. Upon their return, each student will be tested twice for COVID-19 via Lateral Flow Test (LFT) in school with the results processed in 30 minutes.

The same model we used in March will be in place and existing consent forms will be used; however, if you no longer wish for your child to be tested in school you should inform me directly at tomraw@wappinghigh.org

I do hope that all existing consent from families will remain as it is imperative that any positive cases after a summer of further easing of restrictions are identified quickly.

The plan for testing and the staggered start is as follows:

Thursday 2nd September - Year 7 return (consent to be obtained for Lateral Flow Tests to be taken in school and this will take place the following week). No other year groups attend school that day.

Friday 3rd September - Year 11 arrive at the normal school time for their first day back and will be tested for COVID-19.

Year 10 will arrive at 10:45am for their first day back and will be tested for COVID-19.

Monday 6th September - Year 9 will arrive for their first day back at the normal time and will be tested for COVID-19.

Year 8 will arrive at 10:45am for their first day back and will be tested for COVID-19.

While the above process will be thorough and in the best interest of keeping everyone safe, please do ensure that your child takes a Lateral Flow Test the evening before they return to school in order to limit any chance of spreading the virus within our community.

In the meantime, if you have any questions, queries or concerns then please do not hesitate to contact me at tomraw@wappinghigh.org

Best wishes and stay safe.

Mr. T. Raw, Deputy Headteacher

Goodbye to leaving colleagues

Thankfully, the staff here at Wapping High tend not to leave us as often as staff leave in other schools but now and again some key important people move on. There are a few staff leaving this year to pursue new opportunities and career paths elsewhere so I'd like to wish a fond farewell to Ms Jervier, Mr Jarovoj, Ms Gibson, Mr Webb & Mr Matthews who've worked so very hard in the time they've spent with us and will be sorely missed from the WHS team... Thank you from everyone!

I'd also like to say a huge thank you and best wishes for the future to Mr Webb who leaves us at the end of this term to take on a similar role in Gothenburg, Sweden. Great job Harry!

Best of luck to all our leavers here!

Key priorities for the next academic year

As we continue forward on our road to recovery, we need to make sure that the school's priorities for next year are the right ones for everybody involved.

I am encouraged that the Government continues to reflect on its initial thinking that the 19th July would be a full relaxation of all restrictions. I am equally encouraged that the bubble approach in schools has been removed and a more sensible approach to enforced isolation is being looked at as the bubble and group isolation scenario has caused so much chaos for schools and everyone involved.

Mr Raw's section of this letter goes into detail about testing here at the school in September but I would also advise you to continue to look out for more information from central Government and from the school, to help us all stay as safe as we possibly can.

Year 11 exams next year

There continues to be a question mark over what examinations will look like next summer for next year's Year 11 and there remains the constant concern we have regarding how the Delta variant will affect students' learning in the next academic year. Mr Palmer, and Ms Stonebanks, continue to follow very closely all developments in this area as we did this year very successfully with our Year 11 leavers.

We will continue to keep you up to date with anything we feel you should know here. Rest assured there is no greater priority to me personally than ensuring that Year 11 are as prepared as possible for their upcoming examinations.

Coaching and Mentoring

Another key priority for WHS next year remains further embedding coaching and mentoring for all students and staff here at the school. Ms Ingram, as part of her promotion to Assistant Headteacher here at the school from September 1, has a principal focus of ensuring that coaching and mentoring is a mainstay experience for everyone here.

It is widely documented that coaching and mentoring have significant impact on schools that use them to motivate students to achieve more aspirational goals.

I wish Ms Ingram the best of luck in this exciting new journey for her here at the school.

Further Curriculum improvements

I'd like to start here by thanking Mr Dean, Assistant Headteacher for Curriculum, who's done a fantastic job in stepping up our curriculum offer yet again in the next academic year. We are now introducing RS (Religious Studies) and GCSE Computer Science here at WHS for the first time.

All this coupled with our post Covid planning for stepping up Enrichment time and Mr Wiles' work in constantly improving the Workshop Wednesday experience ready for next year really makes our offer stand out. I thank everyone involved for working so hard to achieve this.

Partnerships

Regardless of the pandemic, this has been a particularly busy time for me this year as I've continued to explore the possibility of firming up partnerships to potentially improve our provision. We are currently in communication with the Regional Schools Commissioner for East London as to what are the options for the school as we continue to grow and strengthen our offer to local young people and their families. I'll certainly keep you posted there!

I can tell parents that we have a very strong working relationship with School 21 in Stratford which is one of the core schools in the Big Education Academic Trust and I am absolutely confident that the work we do together will have a really strong positive impact on our schools. I will keep you up to date here as and when I can.

Safeguarding reminder

Student welfare and wellbeing are equally important to us during the holiday period and as such every student will receive their safeguarding card, which provides contact numbers for agencies they may wish to call on out of term time. Please be reassured that staff will also be monitoring the safe@wappinghigh.org email for any member of our community to contact us with any concerns.

Final message

It's obvious again sadly, that this Summer break is probably going to be a different experience again for our children this year. During this year at school, I feel that staff here have done everything they can to ensure they've made everything feel as normal as possible for all students here. I feel it's so important for us all to continue to do this and help build up their confidence and belief that we will come out of this exhausting situation very soon now.

I will be ending the term by thanking the team here at school but also ensuring I give them the time during the Eid closure and INSET day on Monday and Tuesday next week to make sure everyone's fully ready for September. Please do play your part by congratulating your child for getting through this year and making the very best of an incredibly challenging situation.

I am hoping that you and your family get to spend some really good quality time together over the summer break and allow your child every opportunity to recharge ready to hit the ground running again in September.

Best wishes and thank you for your support.



Gary Nelson