

Principal: Simon Warburton



ELY COLLEGE

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11th September 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

Thank you for your support in helping students return to college this first full week. I'm pleased to say students are beginning to settle and get to grips with all the new routines. Attendance has also been really pleasing with an average of 98% so far this term. This is well in excess of the 89% the Prime Minister referred to this week. We continue to monitor the daily 'operations' and adjust where necessary to ensure that best possible approach in keeping everyone as safe as possible, whilst still maintaining our high standards and expectations.

Last week we made the decision to ask students to wear masks when they entered and left the college site. This decision was made after the first day of watching students leave the grounds and seeing some mixing of the bubbles as they leave and arrive the site. Most students are now complying well with this, but we would be grateful if you could reinforce the importance of following this practice with your child.

Our year group bubbles are working well in college but there are clearly times when larger numbers of children within the bubble are in close proximity in corridors at key points of changeover. While the guidance suggests that presents a very minimal risk within the same bubble, we are mindful that infection rates are rising at present and want to take every reasonable precaution. **Therefore – with effect from Monday 14th September – we will be asking all students to wear face coverings within the college buildings as they move to and from lessons.**

In practice this means the following, students entering college in the morning will do so in a face covering and head directly to their classroom. Once there they can gel their hands and remove their covering unless they have permission from myself to wear it in class. Once the lesson is over and the student moves to another class, even if this is in the same zone, they should wear a covering prior to moving.

Students will not be required to wear a covering during their break when they are outside, nor will they be required to wear one in the inside eating spaces – these spaces are much larger and social distancing is more possible; staff will also be able to spread out from the students which is not possible in a corridor.

I know that many parents and students will support this action. I also know that there will be some parents and students who feel this is inappropriate. Can I please urge you to consider that no-one likes wearing the coverings, doing so does reduce the risk of spreading infection and serves to make many feel much more secure.

In addition to the control measures we have in place, we will also be engaging fully with the NHS Test and Trace process, and will work closely with the local Health Protection Team of Public Health England and the local authority to ensure that any confirmed cases are reported without delay.

Below are details of what to expect if Ely College is notified of a **possible** or **confirmed** case of coronavirus.



Where there is a possible case of coronavirus in college:

If a child or member of staff develops symptoms of coronavirus, the individual concerned will be sent home and asked to self-isolate for 10 days. They will be asked to arrange a test at the earliest convenience (either by visiting a test centre, or by requesting a home test kit) and to share the results with college.

The parents/carers of other children within the bubble will be sent a letter to notify them of this situation, however, the individual will not be named and personally identifiable information will not be included. All other children within the bubble will be able to continue to attend college as normal whilst the test is carried out and until the result is known.

The wider college community will not receive this letter.

Where there is a confirmed case of coronavirus in college:

If a child or member of staff tests positive for coronavirus, the individual concerned will be asked to self-isolate for at least 10 days from the date when their symptoms appeared.

If they have tested positive whilst not experiencing symptoms but develop symptoms during the isolation period, they should restart the 10-day isolation period from the day they develop symptoms.

Other members of their household or support bubble should self-isolate for 14 days from when the symptomatic person first had symptoms and should continue this period of isolation even if they too have been tested and have received a negative test result.

College will work with the Health Protection Team of Public Health England to carry out a risk assessment to determine who else, if anyone, also needs to isolate.

The parents/carers of other children within the bubble will be sent a letter to notify them of this situation, and will be advised of any additional measures which are required. Again, the individual will not be named and personally identifiable information will not be included.

What you can do:

If your child, a household member, or a member of your support bubble develops any of the following symptoms, we would ask that you **notify college immediately** and arrange a test by visiting <https://www.nhs.uk/ask-for-a-coronavirus-test> or by phoning 119:

- A high temperature
- A new and persistent cough
- A loss of, or change in, normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support. If you have any concerns or questions about the Test and Trace process, please contact me and I will be happy to discuss further.



Frequently Asked Questions

A few parents/carers have made contact recently to provide feedback or query some of our processes. I thought these FAQs might be helpful to share:

Question	Answer
<i>My child tells me that the year group bubbles are mixing?</i>	It is possible that the bubbles will cross streams (at the risk of mixing metaphors) this is tolerated within the risk management so long as the students are passing by briefly and not coming into direct face to face contact for more than a number of minutes – which is very unlikely.
<i>Students don't seem to be wearing their masks upon school entry and exit.</i>	As in wider society, the majority have complied with this request, and we have been working to remind students and enforce this robustly. Please support us in reminding your child of the importance of doing so.
<i>My child is unclear of which areas/zones to use?</i>	Signage is extensive, but we have taken feedback and are planning on adding even more from Monday to help make the zones even clearer.
<i>My child was anxious during both breaks as there seemed little space with students cramped together?</i>	Each Year group has an internal and external base for breaks – we will ensure that students are better aware, through the duty staff and the new display signage, where they can go during their breaks.
<i>The Bedford corridor was over crowded with lots of children?</i>	The Bedford block corridors accommodate Year 7 downstairs and Year 8 upstairs. There are a lot of children in these year groups, but they are in their bubbles, so social distancing is not required. We have removed the lesson change over bells to stagger the movement between classes a little, and will be asking students to wear face coverings in change-overs from Monday.
<i>My daughter, Year 9, said she stood in the rain to eat yesterday, as the Year 7s had the canteen? Is this going to be a regular thing?</i>	That was a problem during the first couple of days. We are sorry this happened and have created a corridor with display boards to ensure that Year 9 can move through the canteen into the main hall.
<i>Children are to remain in their PE kits all day – is there no where they can change into their uniform?</i>	Unfortunately, we are unable to permit the use of the changing rooms for students to change in. We recognise it is not ideal, but want to ensure PE remains a full part of the curriculum.
<i>My Yr 7 child has lost his water bottle, what should he do?</i>	Check in with the House base in Bedford to see if it has been handed in. Unfortunately we only have a limited supply of the branded bottles, so a replacement may not be possible to provide at present.
<i>Is there anywhere my child can fill their water bottle during the day?</i>	Water fountains are available in zones but they must not be used to drink from directly. Please can students use a bottle to fill up and drink from this.

	Polite reminder – always send your child to school with a drink.
<i>Some students do not seem to be in the correct uniform or PE kit, but my child is.</i>	We are aware of delivery delays with some blazers. Uniform checks were conducted in college this week. We have highlighted breaches in uniform policy and families will need to correct this, if necessary. We will work with families to ensure issues are resolved. For PE, hoodies must be plain without any large branding or logos. Or simply a jumper.
<i>Why is my child not allowed to leave a lesson to use the toilet?</i>	We have a general rule that students do not leave lessons for toilet trips – we have ample breaks for students to be able to visit the toilet between lessons. We do have passes for students who need to use toilets during lessons for health reasons.
<i>Where does my child retrieve any lost property?</i>	Large items will be moved to the relevant House hub (if they have a name on – if not then the closest hub). Valuable items will be placed at reception.
<i>My child needs a copy of their timetable</i>	Parents can access timetables at home via SIMS. If you are able to print this at home for your child, it saves us valuable time and resources.
<i>Why do end of day leaving times differ so much?</i>	This is to accommodate a once weekly Form session (Tutor time) of 20 minutes.
<i>For medical reasons, my child is unable to wear a face mask, what do I need to do?</i>	An appropriate card can be downloaded from www.gov.co.uk There is no need for a letter from your GP.
<i>Which House Office do I now use?</i>	Always make contact with your child's usual House office (Etheldreda, Franklin, Scott, Turing) and the SSA (Student Support Assistant) will pass on relevant information to their Year Bubble SSA. Yr 11 also now have a dedicated House office supported by SSA Mrs A Calver. The contact details remain on the website under 'Contact Us'.
<i>How do I access homework on TEAMS?</i>	Homework will be set via the assignment tab on Teams – there is no direct parent access to this so could we please ask that you sit down with your child at the computer and ask them to show you what their team desktop looks like.

We have created a Coronavirus section of the website which you can find under the 'About Us' section. You will find a range of COVID-related resources here and we will add more information as it comes in.

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We carried out our first socially distanced fire drill this week and it really was a fantastic sight to behold. The students conducted themselves magnificently with the Year 7 and 8 waiting the longest whilst we carefully escorted all the Year groups onto the astro turf. This was time well spent as it means that students will understand how to evacuate in safety and it also gave me a chance to address the whole college at the same time.



Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions, big or small, the teams here are happy to offer help and support.

Enjoy the sunshine this weekend!

Yours faithfully

Simon Warburton
Principal

