

21ST May 2020

Dear Student, parents and carers,

I just wanted to take a moment to touch base and share with you plans for next half term. As you will now be aware, the Government latest announcement is that schools and colleges will be doing a phased return from June 1st. Orchard Hill College will remain open for those wanting to return unless you have an underlying health condition or live with someone who's on the clinically vulnerable list, (the vulnerable list is given in our FAQ sheet attached) in which case we are following government guidance and ask you to remain safely at home.

Over the past weeks we have seen our numbers begin to increase therefore, it's essential that we offer a reduced timetable splitting the week into two sections. As per government guidance we are prioritising those students that are leaving this year and will be offering a three-day week service Wednesday-Friday. For our parents and carers who are key workers we are offering our full timetable which is Monday-Thursday.

As you will agree, students and staff safety is paramount and we therefore ask that you adhere to the following control measures.

1. You will be allocated to a familiar classroom with a limited number of peers and staff. Where possible you should bring a packed lunch to College to enable us to minimise the movement around the building.
2. Unfortunately, parents and carers will not be allowed onto the College site for any reason. If your parent or carer needs to speak to your lecturer, please contact the receptionist and they will make sure your call is returned. When you arrive at College we ask anyone escorting you to remain outside of the reception area using the markings on the floor to social distance. A member of staff will come out to meet you for the handover.
3. We are taking the temperatures of all staff and students as they arrive onsite and will be asking that anyone with a temperature over 37.7 to return home, should they develop further symptoms they should follow the isolation guidance.
4. If you develop any symptoms throughout the day you will be directed to the isolation room where you will be made comfortable and monitored until your escort arrive to take you home.
5. Staff in each class have a cleaning protocol and materials to ensure frequent cleaning of surfaces and equipment.
6. Each classroom has handwashing facilities and allocated toilet/bathrooms have been identified for each class group.
7. We ask that anything you may need should be left at College for the week where possible e.g. change of clothes, drinks bottle. Please label items clearly.

We are aware that lots of additional questions have been asked for those attending. To help you we have put together some FAQ's below.

Thank you for all your continuing support and understanding during this time.

Kind Regards

K Phillips
Principal of College

Frequently Asked Questions

Will there be social distancing at College? How can social distancing be enforced?

We will encourage social distance by spreading out across larger spaces and multiple classrooms and using outside space as much as possible. However, we anticipate that the majority of students will not be able to achieve physical distancing, and therefore will aim to limit contact to smaller groups of people.

Will days/hours be the same as usual?

We have a maximum capacity of students allocated to each centre to reduce the number of people onsite at one given time. Therefore, some centres have a reduced timetable operating where students are attending part time. Hours have remained the same, however we have introduced a staggered start time in some centres to reduce the footfall when arriving/leaving College.

When will I be asked to remain at home?

If anyone becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature, or has a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia), they should follow the COVID-19: guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection guidance - to self-isolate for 7 days and for other household members to self-isolate for 14 days. If they develop symptoms at College, they will be isolated from others and sent home to self-isolate.

All staff and students who are attending an education setting will have access to a test if they display symptoms of coronavirus and are encouraged to get tested in this scenario. You can request a test through the 111 online booking system.

If they test negative, you can return to College and others in your household can end their self-isolation.

If they test positive, the rest of their class group will be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 14 days. The other household members of that wider class or group do not need to self-isolate unless the young person or staff member in that group subsequently develops symptoms.

What if I become unwell at College?

If you become unwell at College, we will contact your parent or carer to collect you as quickly as possible. We have allocated isolation rooms at College, where you will be encouraged to go to with your staff member and rest whilst monitored by the staff nurse.

If I remain at home will I be able to continue accessing learning?

Yes, we will continue to ensure that every student has access to learning as appropriate, including the sharing of therapy programmes, virtual sessions, online activities etc.

What should I do if my emergency contact is shielding or unable to collect me?

You will need to make sure that your emergency contact information has been updated and shared with your Receptionist before returning to College.

How do I know, who is on the clinically vulnerable list?

Generally this will apply to anyone who received the government shielding letter but the clinically vulnerable may include the following people:

Disease severity, history or treatment levels will also affect who is in this group.

1. Solid organ transplant recipients.
2. People with specific cancers:
 - People with cancer who are undergoing active chemotherapy
 - People with lung cancer who are undergoing radical radiotherapy
 - People with cancers of the blood or bone marrow such as leukaemia, lymphoma or myeloma who are at any stage of treatment
 - People having immunotherapy or other continuing antibody treatments for cancer
 - People having other targeted cancer treatments which can affect the immune system, such as protein kinase inhibitors or PARP inhibitors
 - People who have had bone marrow or stem cell transplants in the last 6 months, or who are still taking immunosuppression drugs
3. People with severe respiratory conditions including all cystic fibrosis, severe asthma and severe chronic obstructive pulmonary (COPD).
4. People with rare diseases that significantly increase the risk of infections (such as severe combined immunodeficiency (SCID), homozygous sickle cell).
5. People on immunosuppression therapies sufficient to significantly increase risk of infection.
6. Women who are pregnant with significant heart disease, congenital or acquired.