

20th September 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I would like to start by thanking all those who attended the PSA AGM Webinar on Thursday. Speaking to you about all the new arrangements and systems that we have put in place to allow for the safe reopening of Highgate Wood School really brought home how much has been done and how hard my staff have worked during this current crisis. I could not ask for a better and more committed staff body, always seeking to put the students first no matter what it takes. It also reminded me of the fantastic contribution and support that has been provided by the PSA at this time. I extend my particular thanks to Tahra Zafar who has been the driving force behind much of it. For those who were not able to attend the Webinar, the recording is now available [here](#)

As I said during the evening, all the changes that have happened at school as a result of Covid-19 are in constant review – we have this as a standing item at our Senior Leadership Team weekly meeting. It is an evolving picture and things will change as we move forward. We are currently looking at how we may be able to improve our arrangements for pastoral care through the tutor group system (which we recognise does not easily fit into our current provision), and also addressing the wider issues around student well-being and mental health. Before the summer break we circulated an ImpactEd survey to all students to help us gauge their feelings about the situation, and this was helpful in planning our current provision. We will be sending out the second phase of that survey to students very shortly, and you will be receiving information about this next week.

We have received a number of concerns from the public who have seen students on their way to and from school congregating in large groups, making it difficult for others to get passed. We are asking students to do what they are able to maintain a social distance at all times and I do request that you ask this of your children too. We are also having regular discussions with those who forget their face coverings. We have supplied hundreds of the disposable masks to students, but this is not sustainable or practical. Please ensure your child has a face covering as they come to school every day. If it is not possible for them to wear one please notify us on the link we provided previously: <http://bit.ly/hwscovering>.

I have been thoroughly impressed by the conduct of the vast majority of our students and would like to congratulate them on their behaviour. Those in Year 8 -11 will be aware that their “grace period” of no sanctions is now ended, so there will be occasions when some of the regular school sanctions, including detentions, will now be applied. I hope these will be

Highgate Wood School Student Council supports individual action to address the issues of Climate Change and promotes the United Nations top 10 recommendations.



5-minute showers



Drive less



Lights off



Local produce



Recycle



Meat-free meals



Zero-waste fashion



Unplug



Refill and reuse



Bring your own bag

at an absolute minimum and that our students will continue to respond positively to the challenges of the situation we are in.

I am very pleased that there has been a return to some aspects of normality during the last week. On Wednesday we had the school photographer come in to take pictures of the new Year 7 students and our sixth formers. Though completed in a rather different way, it went very well and the students were extremely well-behaved, which allowed everything to go swiftly and smoothly. The photographer will be coming back on Monday 28th September for another session, taking pictures of the students in Year 8 to 11. We were also able to run our first Parent Information Evening, where Ms Pinnick, Director of Sixth Form, spoke to Year 12 parents in a webinar. In the coming days we have Webinars for parents of students in Year 11 and Year 13, in line with our usual Parent Information Evening schedules, and you will receive more information about these if your child is in one of the relevant groups. You may also like to know that there will be a 2nd hand uniform sale on Saturday 17th October, and we are asking for the donation of old uniform items – particularly blazers – to come in before then.

However, we also need to be prepared for families needing to stay at home and the risk of larger groups of students being required to work from home for a period of time. In preparation for that we are reminding students of how to get on to Google Classrooms and our other online resources, and I attach two of the key documents to help support them with this.

Finally, I would like to remind families that we are steadily approaching the end of the month, and we will soon be in October: Black History Month. As ever, I hope we will be able to celebrate this occasion effectively, albeit differently from normal. More information about this will be circulated

As well as the regular parental texts and emails with the information you need, our school website at www.hws.uk.com and our twitter feed @highgatewood will be kept up to date with news and information about what is happening at school, so I do ask that you keep alert to these.

With thanks for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Cozier', with a stylized flourish underneath.

Patrick Cozier
Headteacher