



OMAGH HIGH SCHOOL

14 Crevenagh Road - Omagh - Co. Tyrone - BT79 0EQ

Principal: - Mr C Gaitatzis B.Sc. (Hons.) PGCE, M.B.A

4 January 2022

Dear Parent / Guardian

I trust that you have had a restful and enjoyable Christmas with your family and friends. As we embark on the Spring Term 2022, may I begin by wishing you all a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year.

Undoubtedly, this will be a term which will present many challenges for all schools in relation to everyday academic provision alongside safeguarding staff and pupils alike. Therefore, I would like to update you on the mitigations which will be implemented in Omagh High School in light of the NI Executive's decisions and the very significant increase in Covid-19 cases in the local community. As has been our practice to date, all mitigations will be reviewed on a monthly basis or as deemed necessary.

Please read this document carefully and encourage your child to adhere to the mitigations so that both they and everyone in the school community may remain as safe as possible thus enabling the school to remain fully open to our pupils.

Return to School - January 2022

It is our aim to have all pupils return to full-time education in a safe and manageable manner within the revised COVID-19 restrictions.

To begin the new term, the following arrangements will be implemented. It is vitally important that you stress with your child/ren the need to adhere strictly to the protocols which are in place so that school may continue to be a safe environment for all.

On Arrival:

- Pupils who travel to school by car should be dropped off in the car park at the playing fields.
- Before entering school, pupil temperatures will be taken using infra-red thermometers. If a pupil has a temperature then they will be kept separate from other pupils, parents contacted and asked to collect them as soon as possible. A PCR test will be required.
- Pupils may arrive from 8.15am but not before.
- On entering school via the front door, pupils will be required to sanitise their hands immediately.
- Pupils will then be directed to the lockers where they should leave their mobile phones before going to wash their hands and then proceeding directly to the supervised designated zone for their year group.
- **Parents and visitors will not be permitted to enter the school premises without an appointment.**



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In School:

- Social distancing (where possible) and a one-way system are in place. Pupils are expected to adhere to these requirements.
- Pupils will be escorted from their designated zones to registration classes at 8.55am.
- Hand sanitisers have been placed in all classrooms. These should be used before entry to rooms and when leaving rooms.
- Classrooms will have strict seating plans.
- Face masks **MUST** be worn at all times within the building unless medical exemptions exist or when eating in the canteen or gym at break time. Please note exemption will only be granted on medical grounds.
- Sanctions will be imposed where pupils wilfully refuse to adhere to the mitigations in place.
- There will be staggered break and lunch times for year groups to allow for 'protective bubbles' and social distancing measures in the canteen. **Only 6 pupils per table in the canteen.**
- Years 11 and 12 will have their break in the gym. Food will be available from the canteen.
- The Close Contact Centre will be in operation for those identified as Close Contacts. Further details regarding Close Contacts will be given in writing to your child on Wednesday 5 January 2022. A form for completion by parents will be included. Please read this form, complete the required section and return it with your child to school on Thursday 6 January 2022.

Departure at the end of the school day:

- Homework club **will run after school each day** 3.30 – 4.30pm and will operate in the morning and during early lunch each day.
- There is a staggered departure.
- Years 8, 9 and 10 leave school at 3.20pm. Please arrange for collection at this time if necessary.
- Years 10, 11, 12, 13 & 14 leave at 3.25pm.

LATERAL FLOW TESTING PROGRAMME – NEW INFORMATION

I would like to once again offer this programme to all pupils and urge you to request tests for your child if you have not previously done so as LFTs are a vital mitigation in reducing the spread of infection amongst our school community.

LFTs are the method now being advocated for use when an individual is identified as a Close Contact or indeed a positive case and will be a means of returning pupils to class sooner than when PCRs were required.

On Wednesday 5 January 2022 your child will be given a form outlining how LFTs will be used as a mitigation in school. Please complete the consent form on this and return it with your child to their Registration teacher on Thursday 6 January 2022.

Your cooperation in this matter will be greatly appreciated.



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CLOSE CONTACT CENTRE

This will be in operation in school to facilitate those who have been identified as Close Contacts of a positive Covid-19 case either in school or in the community.

When identified as a Close Contact, a parent will be contacted by phone and the pupil will be required to take a Lateral Flow Test (LFT). If negative, the pupil may remain in school in the Close Contact Centre.

If vaccinated, the pupil will be deemed a Close Contact for 7 days from their last contact with the positive case provided their LFTs remain negative.

If vaccinated, they will be required to conduct LFTs each day for 10 days, however, a negative LFT on days 6 and 7 will result in the pupil returning to class on day 7.

If unvaccinated, the pupil will be deemed a Close Contact for ten days from their last contact with the positive case. They will also be required to conduct LFTs each day for 10 days.

Symptoms or a positive LFT on any occasion will immediately necessitate the pupil's self-isolation and a PCR test to be completed. Symptoms/a positive LFT/PCR will result in self-isolation away from school.

The Close Contact Centre will be managed by a teacher dedicated to this role. When in the Close Contact Centre, the pupils will receive work from their classes in line with their normal timetable. If assistance is required to get work completed, the subject teacher may be contacted or may come to the Close Contact Centre to discuss the work with the pupil.

Food will be available from the school canteen and will be ordered daily by the pupil.

Pupils will have movement breaks and time outside, weather permitting, in line with normal breaks but at a time apart from the main school population.

Mobile phones will be collected at the beginning of each school day and returned to the pupils when leaving school at the end of the day as they will not be using lockers during their time in the Close Contact Centre.

Normal school uniform will be worn each day.

Finally, I hope that we will be able to remain fully open to all of our pupils throughout this term. We will endeavour to maintain as safe an environment as possible for all and value your help and support in this matter.

May I once again wish you all good health and a happy 2022.

Yours faithfully

C Gaitatzis
Principal