16th June 2021  

**Principal’s Update: Wednesday 16th June 2021**

Dear students, parents and guardians,

Unfortunately, the news around Covid Rates so far this week continues to be disappointing. Following the Prime Minister’s update re the postponing of Covid unlocking on Monday, we can also now add more updates about the situation locally.

St Helens and all of the Liverpool City Region areas are now seeing a rapid rise in Delta Variant Covid cases. Our region is on track to reach the Greater Manchester rates of 300+/100k in 2 weeks (St Helens is the 2nd lowest; Wirral the worst). There are now a number of outbreaks in some of the schools in St Helens - 24 positives across all primary, secondary and college settings.

The key headlines from my Public Health Local Authority meeting yesterday are as follows:

- The rate in St Helens is doubling now every two days and the biggest rise is amongst 18-30 year olds
- St Helens and all Liverpool areas are now in a Government Additional Resource Area

Public Health and Local Authority advice is now as follows:

- All schools and colleges must ‘ramp up’ Lateral Flow testing. Can we encourage our school and college communities to carry out Lateral Flow Tests twice a week and report these via the NHS app.
- Staff and students should consider wearing masks all the time in school/college – including lessons
- Strongly advising that there should be no school Proms till mid-July
- Directive that there should be no face-to-face transition events for any year group
- Groups from outside of an individual school/college should not be coming into school/colleges; for example, Year 11s who have now left a school should not come back into school for an event

**In terms of Carmel:**

Our numbers remain low. We only have 2 active, positive cases amongst staff and students and these have both had minimal impact on the rest of college. We have had a further, external analysis of our Covid record so far and Public Health conclude that there has been no evidence of any internal spread in Carmel this year; all cases have been linked to social and domestic contacts.

**Testing**

Can I again ask you all to consider doing the twice weekly LFT test and report your results to the NHS. I am glad to report that our testing return to the NHS went up by 70% last week.
Mask advice

There is really no change for Carmel. I strongly recommend that we should all be wearing face coverings anywhere in college where social distancing cannot be maintained. Thank you all for your continued support with this. Carmel students, I have to say, have been exemplary with their approach to this since their return in March.

Social Distancing

We are going to retain the seating in the Refectory. having reviewed this, the layout of the seating is actually promoting social distancing. We will, however be moving some of the benches out of the coffee area to create more space.

Transition Events

We have made the decision to move all of our planned Year 11 events online and are looking how we can safely manage transition for our new Foundation and ALS learners.

There will be another update next week.

Best wishes,

Mike Hill
Principal