

AS/kl

Ransom Road
Woodbridge

Suffolk

IP12 4JX

Telephone: 01394 385720

mail@farlingaye.suffolk.sch.ukwww.farlingaye.suffolk.sch.uk

Friday 18th September 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

Following a review of the start of term carried out by senior staff at Farlingaye, which has taken into account feedback from staff and other stakeholders, there are a number of developments about which I would like to inform you. These are noted below:

Alteration to the Temporary Timings of the School Day

Feedback from staff has suggested that, although they appreciate the fact that a shortened lunch does improve the capacity of the school to manage students well throughout the day, they have found it to be too short, as it does not allow staff to both eat and prepare for the teaching of Lesson 3. Senior staff have agreed that, now that we have run lunchtimes for two full weeks and can see how they work, and are starting to reintroduce some extra-curricular activities, lunch can be a little longer: it will be 10 minutes longer in the first instance, with the time taken from registration. This arrangement will start on Monday, 21st September. **The Y9 arrival time will change to 9.10am to accommodate this change, but all other arrival times and all finishing times will remain unchanged.** All Y9 tutors have been asked to communicate this change clearly to students. All students will leave registration at 9.30, with departures signalled by a bell. Wet lunches will entail students going into year group blocks at lunchtimes, where they will be supervised in tutor rooms by senior staff and duty staff. I have attached a revised Timings of the School Day document, which reflects the changes noted above.

Use of Face Coverings

The senior staff recognise that this is a difficult issue, and we have a wide range of views among stakeholders regarding the extent to which these should be mandatory for staff and students within areas of the school. As you know, the school decided at the start of the year to allow face coverings to be optional, based on the very low rates of infection within the local community and the potential issues that would come with implementation of full mandatory use. At this point, the local situation has not changed in a substantial way, and we believe that the reasons for the initial decision still stand. However, we will be monitoring local infection rates closely, and will – of course – be responsive to any confirmed positive tests from within the school community. (Please note that, at the time of writing, we have had no confirmed cases of COVID-19 linked to the school community). According to the most recent figures, the infection rate for East Suffolk is currently 8.4 per 100,000 and the rate for Ipswich is 7.3 per 100,000. If local rates rise to 15 per 100,000, or we have confirmed cases within the school community, we will introduce the general use of face coverings for staff and students in communal areas.

Managing tests and self-isolation

We are aware from the feedback provided by staff and families, that some have found it difficult to find or understand the guidance from the government and other agencies on when and how to access testing, and how to deal with situations where testing may or may not be required. To help with this, I have attached a document produced by the NEU, which provides a clear summary of the actions that families and schools should take in the event that students, or members of staff, or someone connected to either of these groups, develops symptoms of COVID-19. If, having read this document carefully, you still have any questions about how to respond to a specific situation with which you are dealing, please contact the school.

School pick-up and drop-off

Feedback from duty staff suggests that we are seeing higher than normal use of cars to drop students off or pick them up from the school site. We understand that this may be connected to families' concerns about movement to and from school at this time. However, the high volume of traffic is causing significant safety concerns on site and on Ransom Road. It is also causing significant difficulties among residents who are experiencing obstructive or illegal parking, and by the traffic jams on Ransom Road caused by the heavy use of cars. I would again ask all parents and carers not to try to drive onto site and not to try to drive up Ransom Road, unless you have an appointment in school or hold a SEND pass or medical needs pass. Pick-up and drop-offs can take place on Hasketon Road, or at the top of Houchells Meadow, or in the streets just beyond these areas. This will allow students to have a very short walk to school, but will keep the areas around school much safer for the children attending Farlingaye. Please note that, from Monday 21st September, senior staff will be on patrol at the top of Ransom Road and will ask drivers to stop at that point, unless they have a good reason to enter the school site.

Use of Technology to Support Home Learning

At this point, we are moving all key tasks and presentations onto Sharepoint so that students can access all current and recent work from home. This should support any student who has to self-isolate to continue to access the full curriculum. More information will be coming to families over the next few days on how to use smart phones to access Sharepoint, which should support all students to engage with materials and tasks as required.

Please contact me at Farlingaye if you have any questions about any of these matters.

Yours sincerely,

Andy Sievewright

**Headteacher
Farlingaye High School**