



Newtownhamilton High School
9 Armagh Road, Newtownhamilton
NEWRY, Co. Down
BT35 ODG

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Tuesday 10th November 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian

Safeguarding Team

Designated Teacher:

Mrs Laverty

Deputy Designated Teacher:

Mr Cousins (Vice Principal)

Principal: Mr Megaw

Designated Governor for Child

Protection: Rev Graham

Chairperson of the Board of

Governors: Mr Bingham

School Counsellor:

Miss Leona Hoey

First Aid



Our defibrillator is located in the main school foyer.

First Aiders: Mrs Alexander, Miss Anderson, Mrs Boyle, Mr Sloan & Mr Watson.

Following the extended half-term holiday, our Vice Principal Mr Cousins and I met to plan ahead for the festive period which is going to be very different this year. Please therefore see below COVID-19 updates and future key dates and associated information.

COVID-19 Updates

School Ventilation & Hoodies

DENI COVID-19 Education Restart Guidance states that *"the opening of doors and windows should be encouraged to increase natural ventilation and also to reduce contact with door handles"*. This worked well during September and October, however we are now experiencing a considerable drop in temperature thus increasing the risk of pupils developing common cold/flu symptoms. As a result, we are reviewing our ventilation procedures in all areas of the school and have agreed **that pupils may wear a school hoodie under their blazer (and over their shirt/blouse and tie)**. No non-school hoodies/zip ups/coats are permitted. It is noted that pupils may also wear a grey V-necked long sleeved pullover and school scarf, which are listed as optional items on our uniform list.

Canteen

Following my communication on 08/11/20, I was hoping that our canteen would be able to provide break and lunch to all pupils in the near future. However, I have since been informed that this is not possible as they will continue to work with reduced staff. Therefore, with the exception of pupils entitled to Free School Meals (FSM), our canteen will be unavailable. **Non-FSM pupils should therefore bring a packed lunch to school up to and including 20/11/20.**

Emergency School Closures

I remind all parents about the procedures for emergency school closures (due to adverse weather etc). Deciding to close a school is not an easy decision for a Principal as I understand the disruption that it causes. However, the health and safety of all school stakeholders is the key factor for me when making this difficult decision.



In order to find out if Newtownhamilton High School is closed, parents can tune into BBC Radio Ulster, visit the BBC NI website, or check for updates on our website and Facebook page. Parents will hopefully receive a text from our school messaging service. The aim is to make an early decision (usually before 7.30am) if possible.

Please turn over for Future Key Dates

Future Key Dates

It is noted that the number of events leading up to the traditional Christmas period have been severely reduced this year due to COVID-19. For example, our annual Community Carol Service (which features contributory primary schools) has been cancelled while our Act of Remembrance on 11th November will not be open to community members this year.

However, our Year 8-11 pupils will be delighted to know that our end of term exams will proceed, but over an extended 6 day period (3 days of exams and 3 days of home study for exam preparation) in order that we can accommodate the social distancing of pupils in our Exam Hall. It is essential that teaching and learning continues for Year 12 pupils during the Year 8-11 exam period in order to make up for lost time during our school closure from March to June.

- Wednesday 11th November Act of Remembrance (in classrooms)
Year 8 & 9 Vaccinations (School Nurses)
Year 9-12 Internal 2019/20 Prize Distribution
- Thursday 19th November Year 13 2019/20 Prize Distribution @ 5.00pm
- Monday 23rd November Year 11 & 12 GCSE Science Modules

Year 8-11 Exams

- Monday 7th December Year 10 & 11 Exams (Day 1)
Year 8 & 9 Home Study
- Tuesday 8th December Year 8 & 9 Exams (Day 1)
Year 10 & 11 Home Study
- Wednesday 9th December Year 10 & 11 Exams (Day 2)
Year 8 & 9 Home Study
- Thursday 10th December Year 8 & 9 Exams (Day 2)
Year 10 & 11X Home Study (*11V pupils @ SRC)
- Friday 11th December Year 10 & 11 Exams (Day 3)
Year 8 & 9 Home Study
- Monday 14th December Year 8 & 9 Exams (Day 3)
Year 10 & 11 Home Study / Exam Mop-Up
- Tuesday 15th December Year 8-12 Normal Class with Exam Mop-Up
(if required)

Vice Principal Mr Cousins will be issuing an exam timetable in the near future.

- Monday 14th December Year 12 Christmas Dinner
- Tuesday 15th December Year 10 & 11 Christmas Dinner
Community Carol Service Cancelled
- Wednesday 16th December Year 8 & 9 Christmas Dinner
- Friday 18th December Christmas Jumper Charity Donation
End of Term 1 @ 12.15pm
- Monday 21st December Staff Development Day

While the above information should prove useful for pupils and parents to plan for the remainder of term 1, it is important to stress that everything remains subject to change as we continue to monitor the ever-changing situation associated with COVID-19.

Finally, please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further information.

Yours faithfully

Neil Megaw
Principal