



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

**Principal:** Mr N Megaw BEd MSc PQHNI  
**E-mail:** nmegaw549@c2kni.net  
**Website:** www.newtownhamiltonhigh.org.uk

**Telephone:** 028 30878246  
028 30878192

Friday 17<sup>th</sup> September 2021

Dear Parent/Guardian

Unfortunately, the new school year has started with COVID-19 continuing to dominate many aspects of school life and therefore I offer my thanks for your support and patience as we continue to try and navigate our way through these uncertain times.

Despite the challenges of COVID-19, there are still many positive things happening in school and I am therefore delighted to report that we filled all available 40 Year 8 places with our school enrolment currently the highest ever at 202 pupils. I therefore thank all parents/guardians for trusting us with the education of their child/children.

Please therefore see below some information which you should share with your child/children:

### COVID-19 Updates

#### Symptoms

Reminder that the key symptoms of COVID-19 are as follows:

- A high temperature
- A new continuous cough
- A loss or change to their sense of smell or taste



**Pupils must not attend school if they have any of the above symptoms.**

#### PHA Contact Tracing

You will be aware from media reports and also from correspondence issued last week that the PHA is now responsible for contact tracing of all school pupils. However, I would greatly appreciate if parents/guardians informed me (via telephone or email) if their child has tested positive.

#### Preparation for Remote/Blended Learning

It is important that all pupils are prepared in the event of a future partial/full school closure or period of self-isolation. All Google Classrooms should now be set up and it is therefore essential that all pupils have joined the relevant classroom and noted the access code in their Student Planner.

If an individual child or a small number of pupils within a class have to self-isolate, our teachers will support these pupils as much as possible, however, clearly in these circumstances teachers will be continuing to teach all classes during the school day so expectations must be realistic.

#### Staffing Updates

Mr Reid (Technology & Maths) and Mrs N Graham (Science & Maths) have joined our teaching staff while Mrs Scott is working in our Library and also completing Classroom Assistant duties.

#### Year 8 Induction

A decision was made not to proceed with our proposed Year 8 Induction session for parents/guardians due to COVID-19. However, our Year 8 pupils appear to have settled very well thus suggesting that our internal induction programme is working. Year 8 parents/guardians with any queries or concerns should not hesitate to contact me so that any issues can be resolved quickly.

### Whole School Policies

Parents are reminded that the key whole school policies are available to view via our school website through a password protected page. Please follow the instructions below in order to access this more environmentally friendly method of communication.

#### **Access to School Policies/Documents:**

1. Log on to [www.newtownhamiltonhigh.org.uk](http://www.newtownhamiltonhigh.org.uk)
2. Click on 'Docs' on the main toolbar
3. Type in the Username and Password

<b>Username</b>	<b>newtown1955</b>
<b>Password</b>	<b>newtown1955</b>

### New Anti-Bullying Policy Consultation

Parents/guardians and pupils are invited to read our draft Anti-Bullying Policy, which will hopefully be ratified by the Board of Governors in October. This document is available to view on the above 'Docs' page with any comments to be forwarded to Vice Principal Mr Cousins ([acousins005@c2kni.net](mailto:acousins005@c2kni.net)) before 4.00pm on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

### Year 8 & 12 Parents' Evening

Again, due to COVID-19, a decision has been taken to **cancel our Years 8 & 12 face-to-face Parents' Evening that was due to be held on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> October**. It is our intention to deliver some form of communication or virtual interview on this date and we will be in touch soon with further information.

### Energy Drinks & Nut Allergies



It is requested that pupils do not bring high energy drinks (Lucozade, BPM, Red Bull, Boost etc) to school. Healthier options such as bottled water or fully school compliant fruit drinks are available for sale in our vending machines and also the school canteen. Please believe me when I say that our pupils have plenty of energy without these drinks!

I would also be grateful if you would refrain from sending nuts/peanuts into school as we have 2 pupils who have severe nut allergies.

### School Publicity & Use of Social Media

Our school website ([www.newtownhamiltonhigh.org.uk](http://www.newtownhamiltonhigh.org.uk)) and Facebook page continue to receive a large number of hits. Our Twitter page and text messaging service should also keep parents updated on all the latest news and events within school.



Over recent years, Newtownhamilton High School has used social media positively to promote many aspects of school life. Unfortunately, there is an increasing trend across Northern Ireland of parents and pupils using this communication method to voice frustration about school matters which they are not entirely satisfied with. This often results in inaccurate information being shared publicly, thus quickly damaging the reputation of a school or an individual.

Therefore, I wish to take this opportunity to remind parents that **I prefer to discuss any worries or concerns either face to face or over the telephone rather than read about them on social media.**

Finally, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any queries or concerns.

Yours faithfully

*Neil Megaw*

Principal

#### Forthcoming Key Dates 2020

Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> October **\*\*CANCELLED\*\***

Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> October

Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> October – Friday 29<sup>th</sup> October

Year 8 & 12 Parents' Evening (3.30-6.00pm)

Staff Development (no pupils in school)

Mid-Term Holiday

