



Dear parents/carers,

Before we begin our break for half term, I thought you might appreciate a quick update. It has been a busy period of time in school, as we all settled into our learning and routines; welcoming back students from a long summer break and saying hello to our latest intake. Students have made an impressive start to their studies in 2021-22 and school has started to feel a bit more like the place we remember pre-Covid. That is not to say that we can become complacent over this virus and I will include some important information later in this letter about this, but at least we can begin to see young people doing what young people should be doing in school: experiencing a range of activities, making new friends whilst strengthening existing friendships, being happy in their learning and working hard.

Open Day/Evening

We were very pleased to be able to provide families with the opportunity to take a closer look at AGS during this half term, and we are very grateful for the wonderful things they have said about us. Families who have visited with children in Year 5 or 6, have been very impressed by our students and understandably so.

The deadline date of 31 October for online applications for a place in Year 7 2022 is fast approaching. All applications are via the Derbyshire County Council website: <https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/education/schools/school-places/secondary-admissions/secondary-school-admissions.aspx> . We are looking forward to being able to begin our support for children who will be moving to AGS as soon as names are confirmed in February/March.

Parents' Evenings

As is now common practice at AGS, there will be two parents' evenings this academic year for students in every year group. Initially these parents' evenings will continue to take place online, using the same system we had in place during 2020-21. Parents/carers will be sent details of how to log-on and will be encouraged to book appointments with the teachers you would like to talk to about your child's progress.

Our first parents' evening of 2021-22 will be one for families with a child in Year 7 and this will take place on the first Thursday after the half term break. All of our parents' evening dates for the year ahead can be accessed via our website and by clicking on this link: <https://www.anthonygell.co.uk/Parents-Evening-Dates-2021-2022/>

I hope you will be able to attend these important events and benefit from those valuable conversations about how your child is getting on and how they can improve still further.

INSET Day

School will not be operating as usual on the first Monday after the half term break (Monday 1 November) as we have one of our calendared days for staff training. These days, sometimes called INSET or In Service Training days, provide time for us to focus on ways we can improve and better help students to learn. All of our INSET dates for 2021-22 can be accessed via our website and by clicking on this link: <https://www.anthonygell.co.uk/Calendar/Term-Dates/>

Mock Exams for Years 10-13

The first series of mock exams will take place between 3rd and 12th November (straight after half term). If your child is due to sit any of these exams, their teachers will have been talking to them about what to revise and they will have a timetable which tells them when each exam is. These exams are mainly for Years 11 and 13, but students in Year 10 Creative iMedia and Year 12 Sport & Physical Activity (PE) and/or Health+Social Care will also be included. Please encourage your child to prepare well for each exam and approach each with a determination to do their best. The results from these exams could be used later in the year in helping to determine final grades. They will not be the only assessments during 2021-22, so students will have multiple opportunities to prove just how good they are.

Covid

Thank you to those who are regularly undertaking lateral flow testing and recording the results. Please can you continue to report positive cases (and the students' expected return date) by emailing pastoral@anthonygell.co.uk. More test kits are being delivered to the students with consent before the half term break. Please note the type of test may be different to that which you are used to. The new tests have 'flowflex' written on the box. These are nose only test kits, so please ensure you read the instruction leaflet carefully before testing. The government have issued a blog about testing which you may be interested to access via this link: <https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2021/10/19/secondary-school-pupils-should-take-at-home-covid-tests-twice-a-week-heres-why/>

NHS England will soon be opening an additional offer for 12 to 15 year olds to get their COVID-19 vaccine out of school, such as through vaccination centres, for those who would like to do this and who did not have a vaccine in school earlier this term. Parents and carers of children aged 12 to 15 will receive a letter from the NHS with more information on the vaccination programme shortly, including information about how to book an appointment.

We received a delivery of 29 CO₂ monitors in school on 18 October and will be incorporating these into our Covid safety measures. These monitors are portable so

are designed to be moved from room to room. Not all spaces are suitable for CO₂ monitoring.

CO₂ levels as measures are a proxy for good ventilation. They help assess how well ventilated spaces are and balance a good ventilation with thermal comfort. It is important to note that they are a measure of ventilation and not infection risk.

CO₂ monitors will be used in teaching spaces, indoor spaces, office spaces and meeting rooms. They will not be suitable for use in large halls or sporting areas, corridors or rooms with low occupancy. The monitors provided will be rotated around the spaces in the school so that we can identify the ventilation needs across our school setting. Rooms will be monitored for at least one full day before movement. If rooms are consistently well ventilated, they will be removed from the rota checking list over time. The school will follow advice from Public Health England, The Health and Safety Executive, Chartered Institute of Building Service Engineers and the DfE.

We continue to monitor infection rates closely and evaluate the measures we have in place. I am very pleased to report that the number of positive cases of Covid-19 involving students or staff members at AGS has significantly fallen again in recent weeks but, at the time of writing, at least one positive case is still apparent in each of our Year groups. We will continue to monitor this closely after the half term break and I will write to you if we need to add to any of the safety measures in school.

Thank you for continuing to encourage your child(ren) to adopt a sensible approach towards Covid. It continues to impact on our community. By maintaining a sensible and sensitive approach to this virus, we can continue to reduce its impact on us and on others.

Half Term Holiday

I hope you and your family have a very enjoyable half term break. Let's hope the autumnal weather is kind enough to allow us to enjoy this spectacular time of the year.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Best wishes,



Malcolm Kelly
Headteacher