

The John Graham Centre
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Dear Student/Parent/Carer,

We wanted to get in touch to give everyone an update on the measures we are taking, what and how things are going at the Centre. But firstly, we would like to start by thanking everyone for their unceasing support and understanding as we continue to try to navigate this unprecedented situation. We have been absolutely blown away by how well everyone is adapting to the changing circumstances, so thank you to you all!

With the recent increase of the rate of reproduction of COVID-19, the “R Rate”, we have been looking at implementing additional ways to work safely. In addition to the measures we already have in place, below we will outline some of the other control measures we have or are working to put in place. If there are any students/parents/families who have growing concerns about in person attendance, we understand and are happy to discuss the options for attending virtual sessions instead of in person sessions with you as we feel continuity is very important.

- Staff are now wearing face coverings at all times when interacting with students. We have been really impressed by how well students have responded to wearing face coverings and it’s fantastic for them to be doing their part to protect themselves and others. In line with updated government Guidelines, staff and students are being encouraged to wear face coverings more consistently throughout the day when using indoor areas to further minimise the risk of transmission through respiratory droplets resulting from coughing, sneezing, etc. however this is not something we will enforce this with students as many people with learning difficulties are exempt from wearing face coverings. We are happy for students to wear face shields or visors if they would be happier or more comfortable using these instead. We have found that some students are having difficulty understanding why other students are not wearing a face covering and staff have been doing their best to explain that a person may be exempt for wearing a face covering for many reasons, but it seems this something some students struggle with. So, to support those students understand why some people wear them and not others, we are introducing our own JGC exemption cards which can be worn by those students who are exempt from wearing a face covering. We hope for this to be a visual aid for the other students and would like to encourage any students who are unable to wear a face covering (or their parent/care) to speak to a member of staff and request and wear our cards. This is completely voluntary and we understand that not all students will feel happy or comfortable doing so. Alternatively, exemption cards can be purchased for a small fee from the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower website at: <https://hiddendisabilitiesstore.com/hidden-disabilities-face-covering.html>

Please can we remind everyone that if you are attending the centre in person it is imperative that you bring a face covering or mask with you. The Centre is only able to provide students with face coverings in exceptional circumstances, for example it is lost on the journey to the pickup point or Centre, it breaks while at the Centre etc. we are unable to routinely provide face coverings to students.

- We have registered for the NHS Test and Trace COVID-19m App, which has now been rolled out. Anyone who signs up to the App can “Check In” to our premises as well as at any other businesses or sites taking part. We would encourage everyone to sign up and take advantage of the app. Further information about this App can be found through the following link: www.gov.uk/government/news/nhs-covid-19-app-launches-across-england-and-wales?utm_source=c3eb838c-3d2c-4cf1-8f2d-1adfa30ea86b&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate

- We are capping student numbers at their current level so the number of persons on site does not ever exceed 46.
- As we approach autumn and winter, we would encourage everyone to think carefully about students attending if they are experiencing symptoms of a cold that could also be coronavirus. Some symptoms of the common cold and flu do overlap with COVID-19 symptoms and it is very important that this is not overlooked. A large proportion of our students have underlying health issues that put them at a greater risk of catching and having a more significant reaction to coronavirus and it is vital that this is taken into consideration by everyone.

Current Government guidance states that:

If you have coronavirus symptoms:

- **A high temperature**
- **A new, continuous cough**
- **A loss of, or change to, your sense of smell or taste**

Get a test now. Do not leave home for at least 10 days after your test.

- We are putting in place is to introduce biweekly student screening and we strongly encourage everyone to be mindful of the places they travel to, visit, and socialise. As our students are considered at a higher risk we want to take as many mitigating steps as we can to protect their health and wellbeing. Please fill in screening forms accurately, truthfully and in a timely manner. Each screening form will be reviewed, taking into consideration areas visited, restrictions local to areas visited, infection rates in areas visited etc. and we may contact you for further information, then if we feel it is in the best interest of the students as a whole, we make ask individuals to self-isolate for 10 days. Any student who has travelled abroad will be asked to remain away from the centre and self-isolate for 10 days after their return before coming back to the centre. We appreciate that this may seem excessive to some, however we want to be as proactive as we can in reducing risk to our staff and students. **Students who do not return screening forms will not be allowed on site or transport.**
- We will be sending out surveys to all students who are currently attending on site and would be very grateful if students could be supported to complete and return these. We will be looking at the results of the survey with a mind to using them as evidence, if needed, to demonstrate the detrimental impact on our students in the event of further lockdown measures. While this is not something we are planning on, it is something we need to consider and work towards avoiding so the more surveys we get back the stronger our results will be!

We are still providing virtual sessions alongside the on-site activities and welcome any students who have been unable to return to get in touch with the main office if they are interested in starting, or resuming, online sessions. We are aware that some students have been advised that they are only able to attend one service and we have raised questions regarding this with the council and are awaiting their response, we must stress that this isn't something that we are implemented until we have confirmation. If any students do choose to attend a different service, we would love for them to join our virtual sessions so that they can still get the best out of both services.

There has been talk about a possible "circuit break" to coincide with the October half term, which we understand would be a nationwide lockdown for 2 weeks. At this time nothing has been confirmed but we want to assure you that we are thinking about how we would be able to continue our services in the event of another lockdown. If the JGC did have to close we would be looking to increase the number and range of virtual sessions and offer these to all of our students.

We now have 3 Bubbles which are activity based and once a student is in a Bubble that is where they remain for the foreseeable, with a few specific exceptions. Bubble 1 has been expanded to include Signing Sessions and all 3 Bubbles have access to large outdoor areas with plenty of space to move around. The range of activities being offered has necessarily had to be reduced and there are currently no activities off site but we continue to work hard to plan a wide range and variety of projects to offer to our students.

Bubble 1	Bubble 2	Bubble 3
Arts and Crafts, Sign Language, Walks	Music, Games, Drama, Quizzes, Walks	Yard and Animal Care, Cooking, Pool, Horticulture, Walks

Finally, we would like to ask that if anyone has questions or something they would like to talk about, please could this be done outside of drop off and collection times, either by coming back after 10.30 and parking in the designated area to talk to someone in person or by getting in touch via telephone or email, as it is important that we keep things moving in the car park at these busy times to prevent traffic queuing onto the road and to ensure staff are unable to give the students their full attention and see them into the Centre safely. Our email addresses are reception@thejohngrahamcentre.co.uk for basic enquiries or angela@thejohngrahamcentre.co.uk / sophie@thejohngrahamcentre.co.uk for more specific enquiries.

Thank you all again and Kindest regards,

The Management Team