



6th November 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

Important update: mandatory face coverings in school

Just before the second lockdown started, we received updated guidance for schools which will have an impact on our COVID-19 planning in school.

Firstly, I would like to take the opportunity to thank you for your support again for sending your children into school every day (unless poorly or isolating) and keeping the expectations high regarding homework, uniform and adherence to the COVID-19 rules.

The most significant change in the new guidance is regarding face coverings. **From Monday 9th November, all staff and students must wear a face covering when moving around the school and in communal areas.** We will explain via assembly the detail of what this means for the students.

When reading the instructions below, it is worth bearing in mind that this restriction will probably continue to be in place following the current lockdown and be in place for the medium/long term. It is worth ensuring that your child possesses at least two masks, as they should be washed every day. The latest research shows that face masks containing three layers of close-woven material (e.g. cotton) are the most effective at preventing transmission. Please support your child to get it right at the start in order that we do not have to deal with issues on a daily basis regarding face coverings.

- Your child must have a suitable face covering with them to wear throughout the day when required. If they do not have a mask with them at school, a disposable mask must be purchased from our school reception at a cost of £1. In order to eliminate our staff handling cash, your child's name will be noted and the amount added to your child's online account each time a mask is issued.
- Students will not be permitted to wear scarves or snoods, they must wear plain face masks. Whilst every student must have a mask from Monday, we will give a few days grace to get a plain mask sorted for your child as at present some may only have a patterned mask or a mask with images on. From Monday 16th November, patterns or images will not be permitted and we should have 100% plain masks for students, ideally in black, blue, white, grey or beige.
- Sixth Form students will have greater flexibility with their face coverings and Mr Watson will contact them directly regarding this.
- If there is any medical reason why your child cannot wear a face covering, please email their Head of year with urgency to provide this information

Please talk to your child about the importance of wearing a face covering and why we are doing it: to protect our community at school and to ensure we stay open and running as normally as possible. This is something students and staff are desperately keen to keep and we have seen the impact on morale when students have to isolate for several days when they have been identified as a 'close contact'.

Government guidance also stipulates that extra-curricular activities must be suspended for the duration of this lockdown. Therefore, all extra-curricular clubs including PE and music will not take place but Homework Club will continue, as will Year 11 extra tuition sessions.

Whilst writing, I would like to remind you that the school is colder than usual with the requirement to keep windows and doors open. Students will not be permitted to wear coats in lessons. Please encourage them to wear a school jumper and maybe a vest (v necked for the girls).

Needless to say, these are challenging times for us all but please be assured that we will do everything we can throughout this period to keep the school running as normally and safely as possible. If you have any concerns about the wellbeing of your child, particularly in light of the new restrictions, please do not hesitate to contact their Form Tutor or Head of Year.

Thank you again for your continued support and understanding. You and your families are in our prayers as we face this next phase together and I know our school community will continue to thrive.

God bless.

Yours sincerely

Mr T Miller
Headteacher