

13<sup>th</sup> May 2021

Dear Families,

## **RE: Update on face coverings in school**

I am writing to provide you with an update on the changes to the Covid-19 operational guidance for schools.

The guidance states that: *"From 17 May, in line with Step 3 of the roadmap, face coverings will no longer be recommended for pupils in classrooms or communal areas in all schools. Face coverings will also no longer be recommended for staff in classrooms. In all schools we continue to recommend that face coverings should be worn by staff and visitors in situations outside of classrooms where social distancing is not possible (for example, when moving around in corridors and communal areas)".*

The operational guidance for schools also states that: *"Children and young people aged 11 and over must still wear a face covering on public transport".*

In practical terms, this means that from Monday 17th May:

- We will no longer require students to wear face coverings in school. Students can move around the school without face coverings.
- Students using public transport (including school buses provided by the LA) need to wear a face covering unless they have an exemption.
- When indoors, staff and visitors to the school should wear face coverings as they move around the school e.g. in corridors, staff room, etc.

I understand that there will be a range of emotions in terms of how people feel about the relaxation of expectations with regards to face coverings. At one end, there will be those who will be worried that things are moving too quickly. At the other end, there will be those who will be delighted. I need to balance the interests of everyone. Although we are saying that masks will no longer be compulsory for students, I know that some would feel more comfortable if they continued to wear a covering. We will continue to allow students to wear a face covering if they want to.

Although there are significant changes to the use of face coverings in schools for students, many of the other measures which are already in place will continue. We will still prioritise the use of outdoor spaces for break and lunchtimes, ventilation in classrooms, one-way systems, handwashing expectations, lateral flow testing at home, staggered exits/entrances and the bubble system remains in play.

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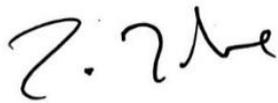


The information on the following link tells you what to do if you have symptoms or you get a positive test result: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

Over the next few weeks, I will update you on the expansion of our extra-curricular offer. This will include information relating to Drama and Music. We will also update you about an increased catering provision.

In the meantime, if you have any questions or queries, then please do not hesitate to make contact with me directly.

Yours sincerely,



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