

Thursday 10 September 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

Health & Safety Update – Including Revised Face Covering Expectations

Those more familiar with our risk assessment will be aware that we carry out a weekly review of our reopening procedures. I am writing to you today to set out a few brief headlines from that meeting, which includes an additional requirement regarding face coverings from **Monday 14 September**.

We are pleased to report that there have been no known cases of COVID-19 in our school community and we continue to work hard to minimise the risks to students and staff. As I have stated before, we are not fearful of adjusting our procedures if we believe they can be justified and workable. More on that later but for now a summary of what is working well and what is not:

What is working well?

- Attendance, behaviour and attitudes to learning have all been excellent. *Thank you!* • The vast majority of students remain within their zone and move around with great care and consideration for others.
- Students have waited patiently for their teachers to arrive to their lessons and have also been patient when moving between their zone and a specialist classroom.
- The separate playgrounds and playing fields are actually an improvement on what we have done in the past.

What needs to be better?

- Too often, students forget to sanitise their hands as they enter buildings or classrooms. They do always sanitise when reminded but they need to be less reliant on reminders.
- Too often, some students can forget about personal space and either cluster together or make physical contact. Again, they are great when reminded but they need to be less reliant.
- The school bus drivers report that some students have been removing their face coverings once the bus has left the school site.
- Even with really well behaved and cooperative students, some of the corridors are too congested. Keeping a safe distance whilst moving between lessons is proving more difficult to achieve and this is why we shall widen the use of face coverings from **Monday 14 September**.

Continued...

Why, where and how?

Why: We believe that by wearing face coverings in particular places in our school, we can further reduce the risk of spreading infection in congested parts of the school, or in those parts of the school where there is a slightly increased risk of a student inadvertently passing a student from a different year group.

Where: Students and staff will be expected to wear a disposable or washable face covering when they are in the building, but they do not need to wear one when they are in their lessons, in a classroom or outside at break time.

From **Monday 14 September**, students will be expected to wear a face covering as follows:

- As soon as they step on to the school site and until they sit down in their tutor rooms;
- Walking around any corridor in the school (between lessons or during break time);
- Whilst using the toilets or changing rooms;
- From when they leave their final lesson of the day until they leave the site or step off the school bus or public transport.

Exceptions apply to a very limited number of students and staff with specific health conditions. If in doubt, please contact the relevant Head of Year to discuss.

Mr Ward will speak to our sixth formers regarding their internal social spaces and the safest way to balance their desire to be together against the risks associated with congested spaces.

How: It is very important that we all carry our face coverings in a sealed plastic bag or sealed storage container. Furthermore, we must all adopt a routine of sterilising our hands *after* we remove and have safely store our face coverings. More information on the importance of these steps can be found by looking at the [Centers for Disease Control & Prevention website](#).

Classroom Routine: Enter □ Remove Face Covering □ Store Face Covering □ Sterilise Hands.

From Monday 14 September

Starting Monday, we shall of course be reminding students of this additional measure and know they will continue to work with us on this approach. It is of course a bit annoying and frustrating but worth it, because it is likely to help to reduce risks and transmission rates in our community.

All of this information will be communicated to your children by their tutors and teachers this week.

I hope this decision has been clearly and reasonably communicated to you. I also wish to reassure you that such decisions are never taken lightly and that we know that this will necessitate some additional preparations over the weekend.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Barry Doherty', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Barry Doherty

Headteacher