

30<sup>th</sup> August 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

### **Face Masks**

I think you will know that we have been expecting the Government to make a new statement about face masks before the new term got underway. This reached us on Wednesday last week and I can now summarise for you our own arrangements from 2<sup>nd</sup> September onwards.

#### **Bringing a face mask to school**

We shall expect every student to have with them a face mask in a resealable bag. The mask may be of any type but it should not carry any silly or offensive slogans. Initially we will have a small stock of disposable masks which we can give to those who have forgotten theirs.

Tutors will give instructions as to how they should be worn, safely removed and carried.

#### **Wearing a face mask in the classroom**

We shall follow the Government's policy which is that "their use in the classroom should be avoided."

#### **Wearing a face mask when moving between classrooms**

The arrangements that we have made will greatly reduce movement between classrooms. Wherever possible, it is the teacher who will move on a change of lessons. When students do have to move, however, they should wear a face mask whilst passing along corridors and other thoroughfares.

#### **Wearing a face mask during morning break and lunch break**

There is no requirement to wear a face mask when out in the fresh air, provided that social distancing is maintained. During times of bad weather students will need to be inside. Each zone will have its own indoor area in which to shelter and the need to wear face masks will vary from one to another. Tutors will explain to their groups what will happen in each case.

#### **Wearing a face mask at the catering outlet**

Each zone will have its own arrangements for serving food during break and lunchtime. Here we will take our example from shops and cafés. Students sitting down to eat will, of course, not be expected to use a face mask, but one will be necessary whilst choosing food and waiting one's turn. When students are sitting down to eat they should put their mask away and not put it on the table.

#### **Wearing a face mask on school transport**

The Government is now expecting that all students on a school bus will be wearing a face mask. As you know, that has been a requirement on public transport for some time.

**Why are these arrangements necessary?**

Schools are being told, as is the general public, that the three most effective measures in preventing the spread of COVID-19 are good ventilation, social distancing and frequent hand washing. Although we shall do our very best to practise all of these, the circumstances of our buildings mean that we sometimes need to take an additional measure. This is when the wearing of a face mask becomes sensible, an act of consideration towards the wider community of which each of us is part.

**How long will these arrangements last?**

That is a question which I cannot answer, but we do have the Government's warning that they may change if there is a local lock down or if the national situation deteriorates. Meanwhile, we shall keep a close eye on our own situation; if experience suggests that we need to make changes, we shall do so.

With good wishes to your family for a safe return next week.

Yours sincerely,



Natalie Waters