

27 August 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

As we continue to prepare for students returning to school in September, there has been some recent changes to the guidance issued by the government and we wanted to let you know how we are responding to it. The guidance states that *"The government is not recommending face coverings are necessary in education settings generally because a system of control, applicable to all education environments, provides additional mitigating measures. Schools and colleges will have the discretion to require face coverings in communal areas where social distancing cannot be safely managed, if they believe that it is right in their particular circumstances."* It also stated that the guidance would apply to those areas that are in local lockdown.

Wakefield is not in a local lockdown at the moment, but we are making some changes to our arrangements and guidance for students, in order to keep everyone as safe as possible. Staff have been issued with very similar guidance, so the school community is working together to look after each other.

Guidance for students

- Student use of face coverings is **highly recommended** in areas where other protective measures, such as maintaining one metre social distancing, cannot be followed. This would include movement between lessons, movement in communal areas such as corridors and the restaurant. For clarity and simplicity, this applies to indoors and outdoors.
(We know that some students will be exempt from wearing a face covering - if a student cannot put on, wear or remove a face covering because of a physical or mental illness or impairment, or disability or where putting on, wearing or removing a face covering will cause severe distress.)
- Students will be instructed how to safely put on and remove their face mask during the first day back in their tutor group. We expect that students will bring their own face covering to school.
- **We DO NOT expect face coverings to be worn in classrooms.**
- Students age 11 and over are required to wear a face covering on home to school and public transport.

How to wear a face covering

A face covering should:

- cover your nose and mouth while allowing you to breathe comfortably;
- fit comfortably but securely against the side of the face;
- be secured to the head with ties or ear loops;
- be made of a material that is comfortable and breathable, such as cotton;
- ideally include at least two layers of fabric;
- unless disposable, it should be able to be washed with other items of laundry according to fabric washing instructions and dried without causing the face covering to be damaged.

When wearing a face covering you should:

- wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser before putting a face covering on;
- avoid wearing on your neck or forehead;
- avoid touching the part of the face covering in contact with your mouth and nose, as it could be contaminated with the virus;
- change the face covering if it becomes damp or if you've touched it;
- avoid taking it off and putting it back on a lot in quick succession.

When removing a face covering:

- wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser before removing;
- only handle the straps, ties or clips;
- do not give it to someone else to use;
- if single-use, dispose of it carefully in a residual waste bin and do not recycle;
- if reusable, wash it in line with manufacturer's instructions at the highest temperature appropriate for the fabric;
- wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser once removed.

Wearing face coverings has become part of our daily life, so these instructions are familiar to us all. No one would choose this to be the way our students return to school, but if by introducing these measures, it helps us get students back to school and learning together again, then it is a compromise that is very much worth it.

Yours faithfully

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

Brian Kelly
Principal