

Thursday 13th May 2021

Dear Parents

I am writing to you with information regarding the wearing of face coverings from Monday 17th of May as well as news of an early closure on Wednesday 26th May for secondary phase students.

Face Coverings

As you may be aware, the updated operational guidance, which includes moving to Step 3 of the Covid roadmap on the 17th of May, includes an update for schools on the wearing of face coverings.

The guidance states that:

'Face coverings will no longer be recommended for pupils in classrooms or communal areas in all schools, and for staff in classrooms. Face coverings should continue to 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 reintroduction of face coverings for pupils, students or staff may be advised for a temporary period in response to particular localised outbreaks, including variants of concern. The Local Action Committee structure (bronze/silver/gold) should be used in such circumstances to re-introduce the use of face coverings. Immediate outbreak response (at the level of individual settings or a cluster of settings) remains for local directors of public health to advise on.'

I am pleased to confirm that we are not seen as at risk and we are therefore confirming that we are following government advice and therefore students are **no longer required to wear face coverings while at school**. If a student would prefer to wear a face covering, then we will of course allow them to do so.

Parents walking their children to school are also not expected to wear a face covering.

We do still encourage students to be sensible about social distancing and to maintain good hand hygiene. Hand sanitizers are available outside every classroom and this will continue to be an expectation.

We will continue with our staggered starts and finish and will maintain our bubble system. If we do find that students are not following our expectations and are mixing bubbles then we will have to consider asking students to again wear face coverings.

Staff and visitors will continue to wear face coverings when in communal areas but not when they are in classrooms. The DfE have confirmed that the reason for this is:

'We continue to recommend that staff and visitors wear face coverings in communal areas where social distancing is not possible. The ongoing requirement for settings to keep pupils and students in bubbles means that they are not mixing.'

'Staff, however, are not kept in bubbles and may come into contact with each other in a context where they cannot maintain social distancing, for example in staff rooms. Maintaining face coverings for staff in communal areas therefore reduces the risk of broader transmission.'

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Principal: David James **Vice Principals:** Andrew Fisher Katherine Patterson Gary Wakefield

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It is really pleasing to see that we are at last in a position to be able to relax some of the control measures that we have had in place for a considerable time.

We continue to encourage students and staff to use the Lateral Flow Testing and to inform us if they have a positive result. Taking part in the clinical trial on daily contact testing allows us to keep students in the secondary phase attending school even when they are identified as a close contact.

Early Closure on Wednesday 26th of May

As you are aware exams for years 11 and 13 students were cancelled this year. This has meant that students have been completing assessments this term in all subjects. Teachers are required to firstly mark these assessments and apply the grading criteria to each piece of evidence but also to then moderate the work. Moderation involves all teachers involved in the marking meeting together to agree a standard approach to the grades given. It is not feasible to complete this effectively without providing time when all teachers can meet. On Wednesday 26th May the early finish will provide over 4 hours of uninterrupted time to moderate.

The finish times on Wednesday 26th May will be:

Year Group	Finish Time
Year 7	12.15 pm
Year 8	12.20 pm
Year 9	12.30 pm
Year 10	12.25 pm
Year 11	12.25 pm
KS 5	12.30 pm

The only exception to this will be Year 13 Art and Photography students who are completing their portfolio work and Year 11 x band English students who will be completing an English assessment and will finish at approximately 1.20 pm.

If for any reason your son / daughter is unable to leave early, and you would like them to stay in school then we will have provision for this. Please can you complete the form <https://forms.office.com/r/KS5Xs7K2XH> so that we can organise the provision needed.

I would like to thank you for your continued support.

Best wishes,



Gary Wakefield

Vice Principal