

29 November 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you and your family are well.

As you will no doubt be aware, on Saturday the Prime Minister announced additional measures we all must take in response to a new Covid-19 variant, Omicron. This was followed late on Sunday with further guidance for schools from the Department for Education.

In this guidance, schools have been asked to re-introduce the use of face coverings in all indoor communal areas. We will start to implement this from today, and from Tuesday 30 November, we will be asking all students, staff and visitors, **to wear face masks in communal areas** (including all corridors and when queuing in, or moving around the canteen area) and **on buses** when travelling to and from school unless they are exempt. Students and staff will not be expected to wear face coverings in classrooms, unless they wish to do so. **Students who are exempt should bring a signed note** in their planner to their Head of Year as we have done previously.

Can I also take this opportunity to reassure you that we continue to implement key controls to help minimise transmission, including:

- The promotion of good respiratory hygiene throughout the school ('catch it, bin it, kill it')
- Frequent opportunities for hand sanitation to reduce the transmission of the virus. All of our classrooms and communal areas are fitted with sanitising stations; staff and students sanitise their hands upon entry and exit
- Increasing ventilation in our classrooms and communal areas by ensuring that windows are open, as well as encouraging students to use our outdoor spaces during break and lunchtimes as much as they can
- Continuing to use additional cleaners to carry out an extensive cleaning programme throughout the day (in addition to the end of the school day). This ensures any communal areas and frequently touched surfaces are cleaned and sanitised
- Retaining aspects of the one-way systems and some aspects of the school day remain staggered, so that **students' use of the canteens at break and lunch are in year group bubbles**. Before school starts, students wait in their designated meeting points on West and North Playground.

We have been asked to stress the importance of supporting your child **to do a lateral flow test twice a week** and letting us know at once if the test is positive. This is a really important way of picking up cases quickly and preventing spread of the virus. Lateral flow tests will be given to students during form time next week but if you need any in the meantime, your child can collect some from ACE reception. Alternatively, they are also available to order online at <https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests>.

A reminder that students must stay off school and take a PCR test immediately if one of the main symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are evident. These include a high temperature, a new, continuous cough and a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste.

No doubt there will be further announcements in the coming days and weeks and we will continue to communicate with you as quickly as we can.

Thank you again for your ongoing support.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. Ratheram", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mr Scott Ratheram
Executive Principal