

14th May 2021

Dear Parent and Carer

You are probably aware that the Prime Minister has confirmed the move to 'Step 3' in the easing of restrictions linked to Covid-19 will be going ahead as planned from Monday 17th May. This includes the reopening of indoor hospitality venues e.g. pubs, restaurants, cinemas and theatres.

The Department for Education has now updated its guidance to schools in relation to the move to 'Step 3' of the roadmap. The main change you may have seen reported is with regard to face coverings and this has been published as follows:

'Face coverings will no longer be recommended for pupils and students in classrooms or communal areas, in all schools and FE providers. Face coverings will also no longer be recommended for staff in classrooms. In all schools and FE providers, we continue to recommend that face coverings should 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).'

Please note that although it is no longer a recommendation, if there are any students who wish to do so, they are still more than welcome to make a personal choice to wear a face covering if this makes them feel more safe. A number of students did take up this option during the Autumn Term, before the wearing of a face covering indoors became part of the recommended guidance.

The government guidance (the link is at the bottom of this letter) still advises, where possible, on the separation of year groups and for schools to keep things like staggered start times and separate lunch/break areas. We will, therefore, continue with the current arrangements for that. However, it is now possible for students to go into other areas of the school when they need to do so. It is the mixing of large groups of different ages that we have to try and minimise. The guidance does now permit the gathering of larger groups within the same year group however and this means that an event such as a year group assembly or presentation is now permitted.

The next stage of the government roadmap is 'Step 4' and the scheduled date for this is 21st June. I am sure we all very much hope that as the national situation continues to improve, we can all begin to look forward with a lot more optimism and start to enjoy the things that we once took for granted. A Year 7 student said to me yesterday that he could not wait until next week. When I asked him why, he said *'because I can give my Gran a hug and I have really missed that'*.

I would like to wish everyone a good weekend and thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely



David Herbert

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/985138/10_May_Schools_Guidance.pdf