



TO CARE
TO LEARN
TO ACHIEVE

September 2020

BEDFORD HIGH SCHOOL
A Specialist Business and Enterprise College
with Applied Learning

Dear Parents/Guardians

Headteacher: Mrs H J Phillips

You will no doubt be aware that the World Health Organisation issued advice a number of days ago that secondary aged children should wear masks in schools.

On the evening of Tuesday 25th August the Government did, this time a partial, U turn and stated that in areas subjected to additional lockdown restrictions mask wearing in school corridors and communal areas is mandatory.

Schools in other areas have the flexibility to introduce masks to suit their circumstances.

I am aware that Wigan borough has been removed from these additional restrictions however, I have a responsibility, that I feel very keenly, to make the school as safe as I possibly can. I have considered our circumstances, particularly at lesson changeover:

- Despite introducing a range of safety measures, including a one-way system we cannot guarantee that corridors will not be congested
- Social distancing will be compromised
- There will be more mixing of groups and
- Raised voices will mean greater risk of aerosol transmission.

Therefore wearing masks will provide additional protection, is another safety measure and is consistent with our 'safety first' approach.

Consequently, I am advising that it will be compulsory for **staff and students** to wear masks when moving about the site at changeover times. I am aware that some people have medical conditions that prevent them from wearing masks and that will, of course, be respected. For staff, we are able to provide visors as an alternative to provide greater reassurance.

Please ensure that your child brings a mask to school every day from the start of term. Unless they have a medical condition that prevents them from doing so, it will be compulsory for them to wear their mask when moving around the school at lesson changeover times.

The government has included the following in their announcement -

Consistent with WHO's advice, if the rate of transmission increases across the whole country, it may be necessary to apply stricter guidance on face coverings in schools nationally. This is not necessary at the moment but the government will keep the evidence on transmission under constant review.

I believe that it will only be a matter of time before the stricter guidance will apply to all schools.

Unless the advice and guidance changes further, I am **not** advising that face masks must be worn in classrooms.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs H. J. Phillips
Headteacher

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