



TO CARE
TO LEARN
TO ACHIEVE

BEDFORD HIGH SCHOOL

A Specialist Business and Enterprise College
with Applied Learning

Headteacher: Mr P McCaffery

Dear Parents/Guardians,

I hope you are all well and have managed to have a good summer break. It has been great to welcome our students back into school this week for what I am sure will be a very exciting and successful year ahead.

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself as the new Headteacher of Bedford High School. I am very proud to have been appointed to this post by our Governors, and I look forward to working with you all in the forthcoming months and years. As many of you already know, I have served many successful years at Bedford High School, of which 8 of these have been as a Deputy Headteacher. This experience has provided me with a strong understanding of our school, local community, and most importantly, what our students can achieve and become. Our school has been well led by Mrs Phillips and now – with your support - I would like us to build on this success.

My philosophy for education is one which is based around the belief that all students can develop and achieve beyond what they can imagine. At Bedford we don't just see who the child is now, we see the potential of what and who they can become, and we will relentlessly strive to help our students to discover, develop and demonstrate their potential. My aim is for every 16-year-old student to leave school as a rounded individual, who feels excited about the opportunities the world has to offer and is also equipped with the qualities, virtues, skills and knowledge to be happy and excel in life. I very much look forward to working with you all in the years ahead to achieve these aims.

In the parental survey that was completed last term so many of you expressed how important it is for our young people to develop and demonstrate the virtues of kindness, respect, self-motivation, ambition, and resilience. I share these beliefs both as a headteacher and as a parent of two school aged children. Over the forthcoming year we will be focusing on developing consistent everyday routines to help our young people embed these habits of success.

The following is a summary of some further key information that I hope you will find helpful.

Back to school – what you need to know

Students all over the country will now be back in school after their summer breaks. For many students they will be returning with fewer restrictions than when they left for the summer holidays. Now that there are fewer restrictions, students will be able to take advantage of a fuller educational experience, including, access to more group activities, team sports, and taking part in musical groups.

Close contact tracing will now be identified via NHS Test and Trace. Schools are no longer expected to undertake contact tracing.

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For the time being face coverings are no longer compulsory for students, staff and visitors either in classrooms or in communal areas, but they should still be worn on public transport. Should there be a future outbreak of cases in the school this safety measure may need to be reintroduced.

Coronavirus hasn't gone away so there will still be a need for the school and students to follow basic measures to avoid the spread of the virus:

- Testing remains important in reducing the risk of transmission of infection within school.
- Ensuring good hygiene including frequent and thorough hand cleaning and the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach.
- Maintaining appropriate cleaning regimes and keeping occupied spaces well ventilated.
- Following public health advice on testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases of COVID-19.

Attendance to School guidance for parents and guardians during the 2021 to 2022 academic year

Attendance legislation has been published by the Government, stating that student attendance continues to be mandatory for all students at compulsory school age. We understand it has been a very challenging period for many families and look forward to supporting your child back to school.

If you are worried about your child's attendance, please contact your child's Pastoral Manager or our Attendance Manager at your earliest opportunity. Wherever possible, we will work with families to ensure the right support is put in place to support their child. Please be advised that regular school attendance is ultimately the responsibility of the parent/carer, and failure to fulfil this duty can result in an Education Penalty Notice or prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

All clinically extremely vulnerable children and young people must attend school unless they are one of the very small number of children and young people under paediatric or other specialist care who have been advised by their clinician or other specialist not to attend.

What if someone tests positive or has symptoms? Do they need to isolate?

Self-isolate straight away and get a PCR test (a test that is sent to the lab) on GOV.UK as soon as possible if you have any of these 3 symptoms of COVID-19, even if they are mild:

- a high temperature
- a new, continuous cough
- a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste.

You should also self-isolate straight away if:

- you've tested positive for COVID-19 either according to a PCR test or a lateral flow device test – this means you have the virus. If you get a positive LFD test you should book a PCR test. A negative PCR test will override a positive LFD test.
- someone you live with has symptoms or tested positive (unless you are not required to self-isolate – see below if this applies to you)
- you've been told to self-isolate following contact with someone who tested positive – find out what to do if you're told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace or the NHS COVID-19 app.
- Students should only self-isolate if they have symptoms or if they get a positive PCR or Lateral Flow Device (LFD) test.

If they develop symptoms or get a positive LFD test they should book a PCR test. A positive PCR test cannot be overridden. If a student is asked to get a PCR test as a result of contact with a positive case they may continue to attend education until they get the result of their PCR back.

And what will happen for people who have been in contact with positive cases?

Individuals are **not** required to self-isolate if they live in the same household as someone with COVID-19, or are a close contact of someone with COVID-19, and any of the following apply:

- they are fully vaccinated
- they are below the age of 18 years and 6 months
- they have taken part in or are currently part of an approved COVID-19 vaccine trial
- they are not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons.

Instead, they will be contacted by NHS Test and Trace, informed they have been in close contact with a positive case and advised to take a PCR test. They do not need to isolate while awaiting the PCR test and should continue to attend school as normal.

Additional Bank Holiday 2021-22 - Queen's Platinum Jubilee

For the academic year 2021/22, in acknowledgement of the additional Bank Holiday for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, I can confirm that there will be an additional day of holiday on **Friday 17 December 2021**.

Thank-you for your ongoing support,

Yours faithfully,



Mr P McCaffery