



**Bexley Grammar School**  
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and IB World School  
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Dear Parent/Carer,

I write about two important changes.

Firstly, the “rule of six” law change on Monday does not apply in schools. However, it is important that your children understand that it **does apply as soon as they are outside the school gates**. Thus, a group of 7 students walking together along Danson Crescent or sitting together in Danson Park will be breaking the law from Monday.

Secondly, you will be aware that recommendations regarding face coverings have been evolving in recent days. The [DfE guidance](#) for schools was updated again this week and now states the following (sections relevant to primary schools have been left out) as part of control measures in schools:

## **“2. Where recommended, use of face coverings in schools**

The government is not recommending universal use of face coverings in all schools. Schools that teach children in years 7 and above and which are not under specific local restriction measures will have the discretion to require face coverings for pupils, staff and visitors in areas outside the classroom where social distancing cannot easily be maintained, such as corridors and communal areas and it has been deemed appropriate in those circumstances.

In particular, schools that teach years 7 and above may decide to recommend the wearing of face coverings for pupils, staff or visitors in communal areas outside the classroom where the layout of the schools makes it difficult to maintain social distancing when staff and pupils are moving around the premises, for example, corridors.

Based on current evidence and the measures that schools are already putting in place, such as the system of controls and consistent bubbles, face coverings will not be necessary in the classroom even where social distancing is not possible. Face coverings would have a negative impact on teaching and their use in the classroom should be avoided.”

Our school fits the description of a layout that "makes it difficult to maintain social distancing when staff and pupils are moving around the premises, for example, corridors". **I am therefore, from this Monday, recommending that everyone in the school wear a face covering in corridors**

**and communal areas inside buildings.** Please note that this does not apply to the classroom where face coverings are still **not** recommended.

I plan to implement the **requirement** (“**should**”) for face coverings **only if local restrictions are put in place** as per the DfE guidance:

### **Where local restrictions apply**

In areas where local lockdowns or restrictions are in place, face coverings should be worn by adults and pupils (in years 7 and above) in areas outside classrooms when moving around communal areas where social distancing is difficult to maintain such as corridors.

The wearing of a face covering from Monday is a **recommendation**, not a requirement, but I would ask that you encourage your child to wear one in the corridors and communal areas inside the building. The recommendation does not apply to outside areas in the fresh air.

It is important to stress with your child that regular hand-washing and sanitising remains the most effective defence against the spread of the virus. Face coverings can themselves be a source of transfer of the virus if they are mishandled; please impress upon your child the guidance about the safe use of face coverings:

“Safe wearing of face coverings requires cleaning of hands before and after touching – including to remove or put them on – and the safe storage of them in individual, sealable plastic bags between use. Where a face covering becomes damp, it should not be worn and the face covering should be replaced carefully.

Pupils must be instructed not to touch the front of their face covering during use or when removing it and they must dispose of temporary face coverings in a ‘black bag’ waste bin (not recycling bin) or place reusable face coverings in a plastic bag they can take home with them, and then wash their hands again before heading to their classroom.”

It would be helpful if, on Monday, students can bring to school a reusable face covering and a plastic bag, such as a sandwich bag, in which to store it during lessons. We will reinforce in school the guidance above about the safe use of face coverings.

I repeat that this is a recommendation (not a requirement as it is on public transport or in shops for example) and students will not be sanctioned if they choose not to wear a face covering. However, I anticipate that the majority of students and staff will follow this recommendation.

Adding one more paragraph to an already over-long letter, I would like to report that the daily pick up and drop off is running more smoothly now and most parents are staying well away from the school gates or encouraging their children to make the last part of their journey without them. In school, students are gradually finding their way around the new systems more efficiently. Also, I am pleased to report that we are starting, in the next week or two, a few extra-curricular activities after school where they involve a single year group and therefore do not mix bubbles. Students will be invited/notified about these in due course. And finally, we are also starting detentions after

school next week (socially distanced in the school hall) although I hope these will not be necessary!

As always, thank you for your support.

Have a good weekend.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'SElphick', written in a cursive style.

Steve Elphick