



Bexley Grammar School
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A Specialist Language College
and IB World School
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16th October 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

My apologies for a second letter so soon after yesterday's; new guidance to schools came through today.

You will be aware that the London Borough of Bexley has been moved to Tier 2, Covid alert level 'High'. The DfE has confirmed that in areas at Local COVID Alert Level High or Local COVID Alert Level Very High, *"education and childcare providers will normally remain open for all pupils, with the additional expectation that where pupils in year 7 and above are educated, face coverings should be worn by adults and pupils when moving around the premises, outside of classrooms, such as in corridors and communal areas where social distancing cannot easily be maintained."*

I am therefore introducing the compulsory wearing of masks immediately, from this Monday 19th October. We have known that this would come at some point and I think it is important that students see that this is a step-change from before, now that rates of infections are rising nationally, and as part of the national effort to prevent this pandemic from spiralling out of control again.

Students should have been informed today with the following message but at short notice, some may not have received it - please reinforce with them:

*"From Monday, the current recommendation for all students and staff to wear face coverings in corridors and communal areas **inside** will change to **COMPULSORY** as a result of the announcement that London boroughs are moving to Tier 2.*

Please ensure that you bring a face covering and a small plastic bag to keep it in from Monday. At the end of each lesson you will need to put your face covering on until you arrive at your next lesson (or until you are outside) when you should take it off, put it in the bag and sanitise your hands. Please bring your own sanitiser to help with this process.

We hope sanctions will not be necessary as we work together to keep each other safe and most importantly, to keep teachers and the vulnerable parents and grandparents of many of our students safe."

Please ensure that your child brings a face covering and a small plastic bag to keep it in from Monday. In order to use the covering properly, I would also ask that your child carries a small **bottle of sanitiser** with them at all times (and preferably some wipes too).

Please note: Any student who has a medical reason why she/he cannot wear a face covering must bring a letter in from home with evidence for this and see her/his Director of Studies for a pass to confirm their exemption from this requirement.

Wearing a face covering applies to all indoor spaces when students are not in lessons and includes sixth form students in their study areas. It does not apply in lessons and when outside the buildings at break and lunch. It applies in the canteen and lunchtime areas except, clearly, when students are actually eating.

I hope that students will respect the need to make every effort to protect vulnerable colleagues and parents/grandparents at home by cooperating with this new requirement. I would rather not have to use sanctions to enforce this but we have a hierarchy of sanctions prepared should we need them. We all have individual views about the relative effectiveness of various measures in response to coronavirus but as a school community we are being repeatedly told that after ensuring that infected people do not attend school, use of face coverings and frequent hand-washing are our two top controls.

Again, my apologies for the short notice. Thank you for your support in ensuring that your child is suitably prepared for Monday.

Best wishes,

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

Steve Elphick