



Bexley Grammar School
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A Specialist Language College and
IB World School
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13th May 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

With our INSET day tomorrow and two weeks left before the half term break, I write with a few time-sensitive messages. Please read carefully.

Community Alert

I have been made aware of two attempted abductions of school age children in the local area (one near Holy Trinity School and one near Cleeve Park School) and of other similar incidents in the Bromley area. I do not have many details but it seems there have been attempts to coerce a child into a vehicle. As far as I am aware, none have been successful and no child has been harmed. I do not want to alarm parents/carers but it would be prudent to minimise the time your child is travelling alone; **travelling in pairs or groups is always safer.**

Face Coverings

You may be aware that as part of the announcements this week in lifting Covid-19 restrictions, face coverings are no longer recommended for pupils and students in classrooms or communal areas in schools from Monday. The guidance also states that the reintroduction of face coverings for students or staff may be advised for a temporary period in response to particular localised outbreaks, including variants of concern.

The lifting of the requirements for face coverings feels very abrupt and for that reason we will accept a phased approach from Monday: The school will no longer require students to wear face coverings in the school buildings but for the time being, we will allow those students who wish to continue to wear face coverings in particular contexts, including classrooms, to do so. In addition, and very importantly, students may be required to wear masks in lessons where the teacher requests that they continue to do so. We have teachers who are pregnant or who, for other reasons, require a greater level of protection still and there are also rooms in the school which are smaller or less well ventilated than others. For this reason, **all students should continue to carry a face covering with them at all times** for use in specific, limited circumstances.

I have been so impressed by how cooperative students have been with all the changes over the past year but particularly so by how well they switched to wearing face masks in classrooms when requested. For

the majority of their time in school this requirement is being removed but they should continue to respect a teacher's request and be prepared to wear a face covering in specific lessons.

Extracurricular Activities

We are delighted that there has been some relaxation to the rules governing extracurricular activities held indoors. While we will continue to preserve year bubbles wherever possible, the guidance does allow a small degree of mixing bubbles if students are kept in small, consistent groups. At all times, the aim is to reduce the number of close contacts that would have to self-isolate should there be a positive case of Covid-19.

Trips and Visits

With careful consideration of the risks, restrictions on day trips and overnight residential visits are being lifted. However, the Government recommends that schools do not go on any international visits this academic year up to and including 5th September 2021. The position beyond 5th September will be reviewed by the government in due course.

We are taking careful, small steps, towards something resembling our previous normality. If each step of the government's roadmap is successful we are very much looking forward to experiencing again the buzz and vibrancy that extra-curricular activities generate.

Best wishes,

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

Steve Elphick