



## **GARSTANG COMMUNITY ACADEMY**

Bowgreave • Garstang • Lancashire • PR3 1YE • Tel: 01995 603226 • Email:  
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13 May 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

I have no doubt that you have heard through the media that there are changes to **mask wearing** advice from Monday 17<sup>th</sup> May. However, it is important to recognise that there continues to be significant disruption to education for Covid-related reasons across the North West which, I am certain, we all wish to avoid at GCA as we have managed to incredibly successfully so far. Consequently, our position (which includes our Trust's guidance and will be reviewed after half term) from Monday is as follows:

- While masks will not be compulsory for either staff or students in classrooms, both staff and students should remain comfortable in wearing masks if that is their preference.
- Seating plans in classrooms and social distancing from, and between, adults continues to be extremely important.
- All adults on site (staff and visitors) are expected to wear masks on corridors, in canteens and in all other busy communal areas unless specifically exempt from doing so.
- All students are expected to wear masks on corridors, in canteens and in all other busy communal areas unless specifically exempt from doing so.
- The twice weekly Lateral Flow Tests should continue to be rigorously carried out on both Sunday and Wednesday evenings, and positive results communicated to us immediately.
- Anyone with any of the recognised symptoms (high temperature; new, continuous cough; a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste) should remain at home and arrange an external PCR test prior to returning to school.
- Students should continue to wear their facemasks and stay in their bubble zones on all buses to and from school.
- We reserve the right to reintroduce face coverings in classrooms if the local situation dictates that this would be sensible e.g. local/school based/bubble outbreaks.

On a related topic, we are making plans for September and, we hope, a return to 'normal'. This will be a 'new normal' with certain elements from the last 14 months influencing our general functioning as a school. Therefore, **in September**, we are working towards the following changes from what would previously have been 'normal':

- Split breaks and lunches: These have been very well received and create more space and time for students to access food from our canteens (which also now have a significantly increased capacity). We will return to only the main canteen (two serveries) being open at break time and both canteens (three serveries) open at lunchtime. All students on lunch at whichever 'sitting' will have access to both canteens and will mix freely with the other year groups who are also on their lunchtime.



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- Outside of the canteens, children will be allocated break and lunchtime 'year zones', with specified toilets, so that the education of children still in lessons is not disturbed. The two canteens (with the newly enlarged Fairsnape canteen) will provide wet break/lunchtime spaces with potential overspill into the Hall as required.

We are additionally very aware that, although we have successfully managed to give some access to specialist facilities (Science labs, Creative Arts, DT and Computing) over the last 14 months, it has, inevitably, been quite limited. It is our intention, therefore, to timetable all students into specialist rooms from **Monday 14<sup>th</sup> June** so they get more regular access to these facilities, and to start to remind students of how to move between rooms and settle quickly to work on arrival. All other lessons will remain in the current Bubble Rooms until the end of the academic year.

After half term, we will be starting our Prefect/Head Girl/Boy process. We have decided that the split lunches/breaks gives us a couple of unforeseen opportunities:

- Fewer prefects will be required and, therefore, we have an opportunity to make the position of Prefect more prestigious. There will be appropriately more extensive 'rewards' to accompany this prestige.
- We need Prefects (or an equivalent) in next year's Year 10, as well as Year 11, as Year 10 and Year 11 will be on separate breaks and lunches.

I hope you will encourage your Year 10 or Year 9 child to apply for these esteemed positions when that time arrives in the next couple of weeks.

Lastly, a few operational notes:

- Students should not arrive on site prior to 8.15am;
- The breakfast provision is currently only there as an emergency provision to serve food to students who have not managed, for whatever reason, to have breakfast that morning and will not only serve drinks before school;
- If your child is ill, please contact us on each day of absence, not just on day one.

Very best wishes and continue to stay safe,

Alasdair Ashcroft  
Headteacher