



SEATON VALLEY FEDERATION OF SCHOOLS

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Executive Headteacher: John Barnes

29 November 2021

Dear parents/guardians

I hope you are well and that the cold weather and Storm Arwen has not interrupted your lives too much!

As you will be aware, on Saturday, the Prime Minister announced the new Omicron variant of Covid 19 and the steps we as a country were going to take. Following that, late on Sunday we received the following guidance from the Department for Education:

Face coverings

Face coverings should be worn in communal areas in all settings by staff, visitors and pupils or students in year 7 and above, unless they are exempt.

Pupils or students (in year 7 or above) should continue to wear face coverings on public and dedicated school transport, unless they are exempt.

Testing

All educational and childcare settings should continue to encourage staff and students to test twice weekly using lateral flow device (LFD) tests.

The link to the advice we were given is here. www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak

Therefore, we are now saying that any pupil from year 7 upwards must wear a mask in communal areas, which includes corridors, from Tuesday 30th November 2021. They will also have to wear a mask on the buses as well. If the pupil is exempt from wearing a mask, then obviously we will not expect them to wear a mask.

I realise and accept that for some wearing a mask is something they don't want to do or they don't want their children to do. However, we have been given clear guidance from the DFE about this. I am sure that you and your children will support us in this matter.

If your child is exempt from wearing a mask, can you please indicate this in their planner or diary, so that we are able to make note of it so that they are not constantly asked why they don't have a mask on. Unless they are exempt, all children in year 7 upwards will wear masks in communal areas and will be challenged if they are not wearing one.

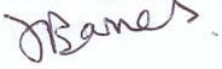
The government is also advising that all pupils continue to test twice a week and we continue to have kits for pupils to use.

Finally, the government decided late last week that all pupils in year 7 upwards will have to have a lateral flow test in the first week back in school after the Christmas holidays. This did come as a surprise to us so we will have to plan what this school based testing looks like. As soon as we have done that, we will share the information with you.

I am disappointed that once again our school life is being impacted on by Covid 19 but I hope that these measures will mean we can return to “normal” schooling as soon as we can.

As always, thank you for your support in these matters.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Barnes". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long tail on the final letter.

John Barnes
Executive Headteacher