

4 September 2020

**Coronavirus (Covid-19) - Update for Parents/Carers**

Dear Parents/Carers

I am writing to welcome you to the new school year and to provide you with updated information on the arrangements in school. A reminder that our term starts as follows:

**Monday 7 September: Year 5 only will attend**

**Tuesday 8 September: Year 5 and 6 only will attend**

**Wednesday 9 September: All Years will attend**

I hope that you and your family have managed to enjoy a positive and safe summer break. You will no doubt appreciate from the media that the national education policy has not run smoothly over the past few weeks. Rapid changes in policy naturally create a climate of uncertainty and become challenging when we are preparing for all children to return to school. I hope that this letter should give you confidence that, regardless of national issues, our planning will both keep your children as safe as possible and maintain the quality of their education in these unusual times.

At the end of last term, I set out for you the guidelines for the beginning of term that aimed to help with transition to the new school year. This letter is to notify you of importance updates to that information. You can find the July letter on our website.

**Facemasks**

The issue of facemasks has been widely publicised. To start the school year, the school's policy will be as follows:

- On public transport, facemasks must be worn.
- On school transport, in accordance with Somerset guidelines, facemasks are strongly recommended to be worn.
- Within communal areas in school, **it is not mandatory** to wear masks, the World Health Authority have **highly recommended** them for children in Years 7 and 8 and in Selwood we would **include Year 6** in this recommendation as they are walking the same corridors under the same conditions albeit at different times. Year 5 have their own separate bubble and entrances and exits for much smaller groups are available.

'Let your light shine before others' Matthew 5 v 16

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Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility - Selwood Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our children and we expect all members of staff, volunteers and visitors to share this commitment

- Mask use in communal areas will become compulsory if the school is placed in a lockdown area designated by the government.
- In the class bubble the children will be sat facing forward and staff will be socially distanced so there would be no recommendation for masks to be worn during lessons.
- Please be assured this is your choice for your child and guidance regarding the type of mask and use of / storage of can be found on

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public/when-and-how-to-use-masks>

We will continually review this policy; particularly whether we have avoided areas of congestion between lessons through the other measures, we have put in place.

### **First day information**

I know many parents will be escorting their children to school on their first day, whilst we have staggered arrival times, I would advise that given the potential congestion on arrival you should consider wearing a face mask particularly if you are unable to socially distance or are vulnerable/previously shielding.

### **Medical plans**

For those children who need to take prescription medicine during the school day or require a medical health plan parents should come on foot to main reception after dropping off their child. Please enter the school from the main entrance to school and line up on the left hand side of the path 2m apart until the receptionist invites you to enter. Only one visitor will be permitted at any time. Please bring with you the completed form (available on our website) and required prescription medicine and when entering the reception area facemasks **must be worn**. This may take some time so please allow yourself plenty of time to accommodate a wait and we ask for your patience and consideration please.

Whilst this may give the impression that school life will be very different this year. I am sure the children will be surprised by how similar much of it feels and that, whilst there are changes, they will quickly adapt and become part of normal life. I know that the staff are really looking forward to being back with them and are excited to help them settle and regain their formal education.

I have no doubt that there will be a few additional challenges that emerge this year. You have my reassurance that I will keep you closely informed and use the website to highlight new information that arises.

We very much look forward to seeing your children next week and to working together during the rest of this academic year. Thank you for all your home schooling and very generous and patient support of the staff throughout the Covid changes.

Yours faithfully



Jean Hopegood  
Headteacher