



1st November 2021

COVID update

Dear Parents / Carers,

I hope you have had an enjoyable half-term holiday. We are very much looking forward to welcoming pupils back on Tuesday morning at the usual time.

Thank you for continuing to play an important role in keeping the whole school community safe. We have been advised by Public Health that locally rates of infection among children and young people in Bedford Borough have increased to very high levels. Public Health have written to all schools and colleges in Bedford and are now advising all to put in place additional measures to help reduce the spread of COVID-19. A letter to families from the Director of Public Health is also attached which explains some of the precautionary measures in more detail. Please read this letter carefully.

Face coverings and additional restrictions:

Public Health officials are now recommending the use of face coverings in all communal areas outside the classroom, and on school and public transport. As such from tomorrow, unless exempt, we will be asking pupils to bring a face covering with them each day and to wear them when in communal areas, this will include in the canteen (when not eating) and during transitions. Pupils will remove any face coverings when entering classrooms and will not need to wear them during lessons or when outside at break or lunch times.

Reusable face coverings should be unbranded and in plain simple colours. Pupils must be instructed not to touch the front of their face covering during use or when removing it and they must dispose of temporary face coverings in the waste bins (not recycling bins) provided or place reusable face coverings in a plastic bag they can take home with them, and then wash their hands or use hand sanitiser again after removing a face covering.

Some individuals are exempt from wearing face coverings. If you have not previously made us aware that your child is exempt from wearing face coverings please email Mrs Foley (efoley@bedfordfreeschool.co.uk) and we will discuss this with you.

This is being described as a temporary measure and one which Public Health will review in mid-November, but they are saying that it may be necessary to keep these measures in place until the end of term. We will continue to follow the latest guidance and will do so if and when it is lifted.

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We will also be looking to take additional precautions to limit the spread of the virus in school, this may involve temporarily limiting visitors to school and conducting virtual assemblies for pupils.

General COVID reminders:

It remains the case that anyone who has coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms or who has tested positive must not attend school. Please read the updated flowchart which has been provided by Public Health.

If your child develops any of the following symptoms:

- A high temperature – this means feeling hot to touch on the chest or back
- A new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours
- A loss or change to your sense of smell or taste.

You must notify the school immediately (please follow the usual absence reporting system by ringing reception by 8:15am) and arrange a PCR test by visiting <https://www.nhs.uk/ask-for-a-coronavirus-test> 119. If your child has symptoms you should book a PCR test and notify the school of the result of the test by emailing covid@bedfordfreeschool.co.uk. If the test comes back negative, pupils can return to school once they are well.

Please note that if a pupil or member of staff develops symptoms of COVID-19 whilst at school, the individual concerned will be sent home. Families will be asked to arrange a PCR test for their child and to share the results with us by emailing covid@bedfordfreeschool.co.uk.

Testing continues to be an important way to help reduce the transmission of COVID-19. Therefore, staff and pupils should continue to test twice-weekly using the home test kits provided. If you have not previously provided consent for your child in relation to testing but would now like to take up home testing please contact Ms Haskins (shaskins@bedfordfreeschool.co.uk).

Pupils should take an LFD test, ideally tonight or first thing in the morning before they return to school on Tuesday morning.

We are really looking forward to welcoming all pupils back tomorrow.

Yours sincerely,



Tim Blake
Principal