



The Priory School

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Dear Parents and carers

I am sure you are aware of the changes made yesterday on 4th November at 4pm, with regard to the latest national lockdown. I wanted to write to you to highlight the two major areas, which affect us. The first is that face masks are now a requirement by the government for all students, in communal areas, in secondary schools. Luckily, we moved to this in advance. Exemptions can only be given and will only be issued, for the reasons listed below, and cannot simply be based on not agreeing with their use in general. Students have been exemplary in adhering to this – thank you for supporting us with it.

For our purposes, we do require them to wear a mask and not a snood, or scarf. This helps to ensure students are easily identifiable, given that only the necessary parts of their face are covered, and are not wearing the covering for prolonged periods around their necks.

Face coverings

In schools where pupils in year 7 and above are educated, face coverings should be worn by adults and pupils when moving around the premises, outside of classrooms, such as in corridors and communal areas, where social distancing cannot easily be maintained. This was already the case for pupils in year 7 and above, and staff and visitors for those schools that were in areas where local alert level 'high' and 'very high'.

Some individuals are exempt from wearing face coverings

- *children under the age of 11 (Public Health England does not recommend face coverings for children under the age of 3 for health and safety reasons)*
- *people who cannot put on, wear or remove a face covering because of a physical or mental illness or impairment, or disability*
- *where putting on, wearing or removing a face covering will cause you severe distress*
- *if you are speaking to or providing assistance to someone who relies on lip reading, clear sound or facial expressions to communicate*
- *to avoid harm or injury, or the risk of harm or injury, to yourself or others – including if it would negatively impact on your ability to exercise or participate in a strenuous activity*
- *police officers and other emergency workers, given that this may interfere with their ability to serve the public*

It is with great sadness that we are also going to have to cease the range of extra-curricular activities that we had begun to establish. **This has to be with immediate effect from 5th November and it will include homework club.** If you have already arranged to collect your child at a specific time, today I have asked staff who would normally be running the club to stay to supervise anyone who is unable

to get home. I am so sorry this comes at such short notice but it is entirely due to the lack of notice we have received. This relates to the section of the guidance below.

The Year 11 intervention sessions as part of our catch-up plan remain unaffected, as they are part of our curriculum delivery if your child has been invited to one they should continue to attend. This will help to maximise their progress.

Schools and extra-curricular

Where schools are offering extra-curricular activities (that is, before and after school clubs) they should only do so where it is reasonably necessary to support parents to work, search for work, or undertake training or education, or where the provision is being used for the purposes of respite care.

Clinically extremely vulnerable staff

It is also necessary to highlight that due to the Government's decision that any clinically extremely vulnerable members of staff should have the option to work from home, that the delivery of some classes due to staff absence may be affected. Whilst we will limit the impact of this upon students as much as we can, we hope we can rely on your support and understanding in this.

The full guidance can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/education-and-childcare-settings-new-national-restrictions-from-5-november-2020>

As always, please keep in touch with us with regard to any queries you may have and again apologies for the short notice. I hope to be able to write to you about other matters apart from Covid, to keep you up to date with life at school, in the coming weeks.

Yours sincerely



Alison Pope
Headteacher