



Bishop's Hatfield Girls' School

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Dear Parents/Carers,

Apologies for the many letters of communication we are sending out at the moment. I'm sure you will appreciate that we are in a very fluid situation and I do feel that it is important to keep you updated. Some of you may be aware that a small number of Hertfordshire secondary schools have implemented temporary or partial closures since the start of term following a pupil or member of staff getting a positive Covid-19 test result. At the time of writing we have no positive cases amongst any pupils or staff at Bishop's. Where staff or pupils have developed Covid-19 symptoms they have self-isolated following the national guidance and any test results have been negative, so they have been able to return to school. We ask that parents/carers provide evidence of the test result (e.g. a copy of the text message/email) before pupils return. If a pupil does receive a positive test result please could parents/carers phone the school immediately, rather than using text/email, so that we can respond quickly. If this happens over the weekend/evening then an email to our admin address should be followed up by a phone call on Monday morning.

As you know, we have put in place many protective measures to reduce the risk of infection at school. These not only protect the school community, but also reduce the chance of large groups of pupils having to be sent home if we were to have a positive case. Our full Risk Assessment is available on the letters page of our website.

Having discussed this with other local headteachers we have decided to amend our policy on face masks. From this Friday 18th September it will be our expectation that pupils wear face masks in corridors and indoor areas where they may come into contact with other year groups. The majority of our pupils are already doing this but this change will give reassurance to parents or pupils who may feel particularly vulnerable and offer more consistency for our 6th Form students who may have lessons at other Consortium schools. The Department for Education guidance, which is based on scientific advice, states that 'passing briefly in corridors is low risk'. However, we hope that this added measure will reduce this risk even further. We have a small number of staff who will also expect pupils to wear masks in their lessons and we ask that pupils respect that wish. Pupils must wear a face mask when in the lunch queue indoors (unless they have an exemption as stated below) even though they are lining up with their year group. If they forget their face mask then we have a limited supply at school but these are disposable and so would ask that you send in a replacement the next day.

If you wish your child to be exempt from wearing a mask then please email the school using fullerton@bishophatfield.herts.sch.uk. You do not have to explain your reasons; we are aware that some pupils may not be able to wear a mask. They will not be challenged about this, but must expect general reminders about face masks as they pass staff in corridors since it will not always be immediately possible to know who is exempt.

"This is an OUTSTANDING school" - Ofsted 2016



Please could you speak to your daughter and ask her to ensure that she has a mask with her every day and wears it as expected. She should have a small hygiene bag in which to keep it. In my talk to each year at the start of term I asked them to show a spirit of altruism, a selfless regard for others, in their approach to school. I would therefore ask them and you to consider the wearing of masks as an act of consideration for other members of the school community. I know that many pupils and parents will feel reassured by this and thank you for your support. We will be displaying posters around school demonstrating the correct way to use a face mask and will also be posting this on our letters page.

Thank you once again for your support. At the end of our first full week at school we had attendance of over 97%, which is fantastic. Whilst I know that some pupils remain anxious about being in school, it is without doubt so much better for their academic and personal development to be back amongst their teachers and peers. The Department for Education has asked us to remind all parents/carers that attendance is now compulsory.

Yours sincerely,

Mr A Wood
Headteacher