

MBA/LGI
13 May 2021

By Parentmail

Dear Parents and Carers

You may have picked up already that face masks will no longer be required by students in school, with effect from Monday 17 May, as part of further measures to ease lockdown.

The key to this change is cited by the Department for Education as:

'From 17 May, in line with Step 3 of the roadmap, face coverings will no longer be recommended for pupils and students in classrooms or communal areas, in all schools and FE providers. Face coverings will also no longer be recommended for staff in classrooms. In all schools and FE providers, we continue to recommend that face coverings should be worn by staff and visitors in situations outside of classrooms where social distancing is not possible (for example, when moving around in corridors and communal areas).'

In practical terms this means:

- For students, the wearing of face masks is therefore **optional** from Monday in **classrooms only** - I would expect the vast majority of students to not wear them, but those who feel anxious or have underlying health concerns can wear them as they prefer;
- Members of staff will continue to wear face masks in corridors and other communal areas but not in the classroom (unless they prefer to);
- Lateral Flow testing remains in place for the moment - twice weekly for students and staff (Mondays and Thursdays);
- We will continue with all our other Covid measures including year group bubbles and the use of designated social and recreational areas as well as split lunchtimes. We will also continue with day-cleaning and encouraging students to wash their hands or use anti-viral hand sanitisers.

After half term however, we will be changing one of our routines as part of our next steps to provide our students with the 'full' SETSaxmundham experience. This change will see

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students moving around the school during lesson changeover in order that they can be taught in specialist classrooms and therefore access the full curriculum. I will write to you separately to explain how this will be arranged and how we will support students, particularly those in Year 7 and those with additional needs, with the transition to this new routine. A key mitigation is the wearing of face masks in corridors and this is why from Monday we are saying that face masks are only **optional** in **classrooms**.

In general, this is good news and is linked to the steady reduction in Covid cases and the roll out of the vaccine programme. Our students have been excellent in complying with all the DfE Covid requirements but not having to wear face masks in classrooms from Monday must come, to many, as a real plus.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely



Lizzie Girling
Head of School



Mark Barrow
Chief Executive Officer