



Dear Parents and Carers

19<sup>th</sup> January 2022

## Face Masks in Lessons and in Indoor Communal Areas

Following announcements by the government this afternoon we have received more detail from the Department for Education which has been sent to all secondary schools. I have copied this in full below:

**'Today, the Prime Minister announced that all Plan B measures will be removed in England, with a full return to Plan A by Thursday 27 January.'**

*In education and childcare settings, this means:*

*From tomorrow, Thursday 20 January, face coverings are no longer recommended in classrooms and teaching spaces for staff, and pupils and students in year 7 and above. They were introduced in classrooms at the start of the spring term as a temporary measure.*

*From Thursday 27 January, face coverings are no longer recommended in communal areas for staff, and pupils and students in year 7 and above.*

*This decision comes in response to national infection data showing the prevalence of COVID-19 to be on a downward trajectory. Whilst there are some groups where cases are likely to continue rising, it is likely that the Omicron wave has now peaked nationally. There remains significant pressure on the NHS but hospital admissions have stabilised, and the number of patients in Intensive Care Units (ICU) remain low and are falling. This means it is right we remove the most stringent restrictions around wearing face coverings from education, but the virus is still with us, and continuing with proportionate protective measures remains vital to protect education.*

*Local directors of public health are able to recommend the use of face coverings in communal areas, across their area only, where DfE and public health experts judge the measure to be proportionate due to specific health concerns. This is a temporary measure. Directors of public health will continue to advise individual settings experiencing outbreaks. Any local introduction of face coverings will be subject to routine review and removed at the earliest opportunity.'*

As you will have read, face masks no longer need to be worn in classrooms and from Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> January will not be required in corridors either. They do need to continue to be worn on buses in the short term and of course if students feel they wish to keep wearing them that is of course perfectly acceptable and understandable.

As the detail above suggests, we could be asked locally to go back to masks either in corridors or classrooms if our local conditions merit this with the decision made by our local Director of Public Health.

I am sure you will understand the time frame, however I was keen to communicate with you this evening. As ever if you do have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

With very best wishes,

Gareth Beynon  
Headteacher