



Dear Parent/Carer,

Update on the use of Face Masks in the Academy from Monday 17 May 2021

Following the Prime Minister's announcement regarding the relaxation of the use of face masks in schools, I am writing to you with details of how that will be managed at The Bourne Academy. However, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you, and your children, for complying with the need to wear face coverings in school every day in the weeks and months since the November national lockdown. Throughout the pandemic, we have always taken a measured approach and phased any restrictions or relaxations into place in order to ensure all children and staff are kept as safe as possible.

With numbers of infections falling and the vaccination programme making good progress, we can all be hopeful that this stage of the pandemic is coming to an end. However, we must remain vigilant and continue to follow the guidelines that have become so routine across the Academy this academic year. Therefore, line ups, social distancing, year group bubbles and zones will remain in place, as will the staggered entry and exits to the Academy.

The Government has stated that:

"Based on the current state of the pandemic and the positive progress being made, it is no longer necessary to recommend the additional precautionary face covering measures ... From 17 May, in line with Step 3 of the roadmap, face coverings will no longer be recommended for pupils in classrooms or communal areas in all schools.

The Government goes onto say that:

"Children and young people aged 11 and over must still wear a face covering on public transport. In accordance with advice from PHE, they must also wear a face covering when travelling on dedicated transport to secondary school"

Face masks are still required in other indoor spaces like shops, restaurants, cinemas and transport (as above). Furthermore, with cases of the B.1.617.2 variant, which is linked to the exponential growth of the pandemic across India and nearby regions, now being found across England, we want to ensure that we maintain a balanced, measured approach to releasing restrictions and ensure everyone is kept as safe as possible.

Therefore, if your child wishes to continue to wear a face covering they may, however, it will not be Academy policy to recommend this (in line with national policy).

It is important, as ever, that we all remain vigilant to the symptoms of Covid-19 even though the risk to young people is very small. There are things we can all do to help reduce the risk of getting ill with Covid-19 so thank you for participating in the Government's initiative of Home Testing in an effort to keep the community safe and reduce the risk of spreading Covid-19.

This testing programme is designed for people **with no symptoms**. If your child develops any one or more of the following symptoms at any time they must immediately self-isolate along with your

household until you receive the test results, from a PCR test, giving you the all clear or if the result comes back positive remain in isolation as directed by NHS Track and Trace.

Symptoms of COVID 19

The most common symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are recent onset of:

- new continuous cough and/or
- high temperature and/or
- a loss of, or change in, normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia).

If your child develops symptoms of COVID-19, you should organise for your child to be tested via the NHS online portal or by calling 119.

Your home testing kit, (the Lateral Flow Test Device) should not be used in this case. You must book a PCR test in line with Government/NHS Guidance.

Please continue to carry out your home testing if you are not presenting with any of the above symptoms, twice weekly, on Sundays and Wednesdays. Can I also ask you report the results to the Academy via the website link [here](#) . More home tests will be given out prior to half term.

We look forward to relaxing our restrictions further, in line with National Roadmap. However, in the meantime thank you again for everything you have been doing to support in these challenging times.

Kind regards

Mr M Avoth
Principal