



5th March 2021

Dear Parents, carers and students,

Welcoming you back!

Not long to go now before we can all return to school and return to face to face teaching. How we have all waited for it! Before I move on, I do want to extend my sincerest thanks for the support parents and carers have shown us during this period. I would also like to congratulate students on their resilience and commitment to on-line learning since January. There are plenty of positives we can take away from this experience but even they can't compete with the prospect of all being back in school.

What hasn't changed

When we all come back, we come back to the same routines we had last term. That means staggered starts, staggered lunches, bubbles and social distancing. It's not the perfect environment but because of the maturity and common sense of our students we made it work last time and we will make it work again. Mr Malam and Mr Morrison will also be writing to Upper and Lower students in advance of their return.

In terms of social distancing, we all appreciate the balancing act between opening schools whilst retaining significant elements of lockdown and the "Stay at home message"-at least in the medium term. This is a message we will be reinforcing with students and I am sure I can rely on your support in this matter as well. Government guidance can be found [here](#).

What has changed

Face coverings should now also be worn in classrooms as well as in corridors and communal areas like the dining Halls. This is to further reduce transmission of the covid virus.

Please click [here](#) for the full guidance. Face coverings do not need to be worn where students are exercising such as Dance and PE. Also, they can be removed when eating and drinking and "Face coverings do not need to be worn by pupils and students when outdoors on the premises. (p.5)" As before there are exemptions which apply to individuals who:

- cannot put on, wear or remove a face covering because of a physical impairment or disability, illness or mental health difficulties
- speak to or provide help to someone who relies on lip reading, clear sound or facial expression to communicate

This was the case during last term and if you feel your circumstances have changed please contact your son or daughter's pastoral manager. Pupils who do not wear a face covering will carry a card to indicate that they are exempt from doing so.

Testing

All students need to be tested before they return to school for the first time. You should have received information about this. If not, please contact j.stanton@bridgewaterhigh.com. As a reminder, after the first test, students will have two more tests spread over the first two weeks back. These will happen during the school day. After this, students will receive testing kits to use at home. We anticipate that this in-school testing will cause some disruption but it is a small price to pay for getting back into school.

Refurbishment

We have used this lockdown to accelerate a significant programme of refurbishment across the two sites. We have upgraded all the ICT in classrooms and at Lower School we have refurbished 16 classrooms which has included new furniture, carpets, blinds, lights as well as repainting. This is the least we could do to welcome back students to what we believe will be a bright future. Till next week, take care and once again we can't wait to have students back.

Regards,

Tim Long