

Ref: GWA/LWO

20 January 2022



Dear Families

COVID update - face coverings

Some of you will have become aware overnight of the Government's intention to revert to COVID 'Plan A' from Thursday 27 January when many restrictions are set to be removed. The Government is also currently talking about all remaining restrictions being lifted by the end of March should the outlook continue to improve. There are some immediate implications for children at the school in particular which have been made clear to them this morning through a simple 3 minute video message. The key messages therein were as follows:

- Face coverings will no longer be required at Tewkesbury School from today except when children are queuing for food or when they are travelling on a school or service bus
- Students will **NOT** be required to wear masks in tutor time, in lessons, **NOR** when transitioning between lessons
- Face to face assemblies will re-start from Monday 31 January
- Our one-way system of moving around the school and other established movement patterns within and through all buildings will remain exactly the same for the foreseeable future

As has happened throughout the pandemic, I will continue to monitor closely both our own school, local and national data with a view to responding swiftly should there occur a sudden uptick in cases. The school has a well-established and previously implemented outbreak management plan which was successfully employed in October 2021 when we managed to avoid any further disruption to your children's learning.

Whilst I suspect the overwhelming majority of you will welcome these changes with open arms, I do know that, for some, they will bring forth some concern and anxiety. Individual children can make their own personal choice in relation to whether they choose to wear a face covering. I am in the unenviable position of trying to balance competing claims from students, parents and colleagues in relation to doing 'the right thing' and, sadly, cannot please all the people all the time. My personal view is that all members of our school community have had the opportunity to be vaccinated, that COVID infections are both falling and proving to be less severe and that we now need to move cautiously towards a new normal for the sake of all our young people.

I remain grateful to all of you for your understanding throughout this challenging time.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. M. Watson', written in a cursive style.

Mr G M Watson
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