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Headteacher: Mrs S. King

03 November 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

## **Covid- 19 Adjustments for the first two weeks of Term 2**

Welcome to the start of Term 2. I hope you and your child enjoyed the much needed half term break.

At the end of last term, like many of the schools in the South West, BFS saw a sharp rise in Covid- 19 rates. There was evidence of transmission in our school setting. On the advice of Public Health South West and latterly the Regional Commissioner for schools, we have made further adjustments to help reduce the spread of transmission after the half term break.

Please see a copy of the correspondence sent out before Half Term here– [Half Term Covid Testing Letter](#)

Over the last few weeks, and even today, we have students and staff seriously ill with Covid. We must take the measures we have put in place seriously to protect against any further impact of students and staff contracting the virus. Navigating the way ahead is extremely challenging because we have moved from a national set of expectations to a local response based on the number of Covid cases in our setting.

Term 2 has some critical events planned; in two weeks we have important mock exams for our older students. We also want to get to a place where we can start to reintroduce wider opportunities and seasonal celebrations. With this in mind, I am writing to stress the importance of stopping further transmission and an increase in cases over the next two weeks.

Since returning to school this week, the amount of students wearing face coverings in busy communal areas and the number of LFTs taken at the start of term has been disappointing. We are therefore strengthening our school expectations to protect our school community on these two important measures.

### **For all students:**

- Unless exempt, students will be required to wear a face covering when in indoor communal areas such as corridors, the Sixth Form Common Room and in the Dining Hall (unless eating), including when moving around the site. Please ensure that your child has at least one spare face covering in case one breaks or becomes dirty.
- Students will not be required to wear a face covering during lessons or when in outdoor communal spaces (e.g. the school field / MUGA during break or lunch) However students may choose to wear face coverings in lessons if they wish. The one exception is the wearing of face coverings in D&T and Science practical lessons where students frequently move around the room to access equipment. In practical lessons where this is the case we will ask students to wear their face coverings.
- Identifying positive cases through Rapid Lateral Flow Tests will mean that we can reduce the spread of the virus and minimise disruption to education and to your household. Students should test using LFTs ideally every day or as often as possible during the next two weeks whilst rates are high. Please make sure the test result is reported on Test Register as well as reporting any absence through Study Bugs.

To support increased testing students have been issued with two boxes of home test kits this week.

If your child has tested positive with a PCR test, they should not be tested using a PCR or Rapid Lateral Flow Test again for 90 days, unless they develop new symptoms during this



time - in which case they should be retested immediately using PCR. This 90 day period is from the initial onset of symptoms or, if asymptomatic when tested, their positive result.

Students will be asked to be particularly vigilant with hand hygiene (including the use of hand sanitiser on the way into and out of lessons and dining facilities) and cleaning of desks at the start of lessons

In addition to this we have cancelled all large gatherings and unnecessary visitors to the school site.

### **Sixth Form Open Evening – Thursday 11 November**

This face to face planned event has been moved to a virtual event on our school website. The planned Sixth Former for a Day on Friday 12 November with internal students will go ahead as planned. Further details of the changes will be outlined to you in a letter from Mr Smith Head of Sixth Form.

These adjustments will be reviewed on Monday 15 November and if rates have improved we can adjust again.

### **Contingency plans for the winter 21/22**

As part of our risk assessment, we need to consider the potential impact of further disruption from Covid absence or other illnesses over the winter period. We are therefore planning to run another Microsoft TEAMS test morning for all year groups on Wednesday 10 November. This test will require students to be logged into Microsoft TEAMS from home for their registration (8.30am-9.00am) and period 1 (9.00am to 9.50am) to ensure they can access a 'live lesson'. During period 2, students should make their way to school, arriving by 10:50am in time for period 3 starting at 11.00am. This TEAMS test will be a refresher for existing students and an important trial for our Year 7 students. Any difficulties can be reported and resolved that day. We are using TEAMS to store lesson materials in the event that students are required to self-isolate or have extended illness.

### **School Gate**

As part of our winter adjustments, the Student Gate on Concorde Drive will be opened at 8:10am, not 8:00am. Students need to arrive on the school site by 8:25am for a prompt start to Tutor time registration at 8:30am. There are no plans to reopen Burghill Road Gate.

I very much hope that the next time I need to write to you it will be with more positive news.

Thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely



Mrs S King  
Headteacher