

Dear Parent/Carer,

I hope you and your family are keeping as well as you can, and that your child was able to enjoy the half-term break.

With the news of new national restrictions coming into force on Thursday 5th November, I wanted to take this time to reassure you about the safety measures which are already in place at the school to safeguard our students, staff and wider school community. I would also like to take this opportunity to update you on the situation here at Cowes Enterprise College and on our new processes we will be implementing around face-coverings as a precautionary measure.

Firstly, I want to let you know that two members of the Cowes Enterprise College community have tested positive for Covid-19. The academy has rigorously followed the advice of Public Health England and has also accessed guidance through the Department for Education official advice service. Any affected persons are following official guidance, including self-isolating for the necessary periods as directed. I would like to stress that neither person returned to the academy site this week and that due to the timing of half term, Public Health England have advised us that no further action is required and that parents and families can be reassured that all recommended precautionary actions have been taken. No further action is required from parents or families of any children that attend the school.

As we enter the second half of the Autumn term, we are continuing to work closely with our local health protection team to ensure that we are taking all the necessary safety precautions, and these are continually being reviewed to ensure they are of the highest standard. This includes: following strict social distancing rules; the implementation of social bubbles with unique bubble entrances and exits, toilets, eating and social spaces; no cross bubble mixing of students on corridors at any times; increased hygiene and cleaning protocols to help limit any spread of the virus.

In light of the national lockdown, and to further ensure the safety of our whole school community, we have also taken the decision to update our policy on face coverings in school as a precautionary measure. **We now ask that face-coverings are worn by both staff and students at all points when moving around indoors, including in corridors and communal areas where social distancing can be difficult to maintain.** It will not usually be necessary to wear face coverings in the classrooms, however, as a result of the specific safety measures in place.

I therefore wanted to share some guidance with you for your child when wearing their face covering around school. It is very important that your child knows the correct way to wear and handle face coverings, as if they are handled incorrectly it may inadvertently increase the risk of transmission. For information on wearing, handling and washing reusable face coverings I would encourage you to read the following Government guidance: <https://bit.ly/3guiK61>

At this point, we expect that most students will have access to face coverings due to the widespread requirement to wear them when out in the local community in shops or on public transport. We would ask that face coverings are ideally reusable (can be washed), are non-branded and are as plain as possible. If you are unable to access a face covering for your child, please do contact the school directly and we will provide the necessary support.

Some staff and students may be exempt from wearing a face covering. **If your child is exempt and you have not already informed the school, please do contact us as soon as you can.** In light of those who are exempt, we also want to stress the importance of students being sensitive to individual circumstances when a peer or staff member may not be wearing a face covering.

I hope that this is a helpful update and I thank you in advance for your ongoing support, understanding and cooperation as we continue to navigate and adjust to the present circumstances. It has undoubtedly been a very challenging time for many, and I know the news of further national restrictions will have caused increased uncertainty and difficulty for many families. However, I am incredibly proud of the strength, kindness and togetherness our school community has demonstrated, and continues to demonstrate, as we overcome these challenges and continue through the school year.

I would also encourage any parents/carers and/or students with any concerns or who would like to discuss any of the above further, to get in touch with the school on 01983 203103 or by emailing info@cowesec.org so that we can support.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'R. A. Kitley', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Rachel Kitley
Principal