

Dear Varndean families

### **Coronavirus update 5th November**

In the light of Saturday's announcement about additional national restrictions in place from today we have been discussing this week the impact of this news on our COVID risk assessment

We have reached the conclusion that with cases rising, including among secondary school age children, it is necessary to increase our school based protective measures during this period to protect all members of the school, and the community more broadly, while we are required to stay open.

Our view is that the current measures are working and do not need to be rewritten but do need to be enhanced while we face a heightened risk. And with this in mind from **Monday the 9th November through to Friday 4th December** all members of the school community will be ***required to wear a face covering at all times*** when they are inside the building. This will not apply to staff and students who we know are exempt. The only exception to this is that teachers may remove their covering when explaining the lesson to a class to ensure good communication and that learning is not hindered.

We recognise that wearing face coverings at all times will not make life at school easier but believe that the risk reduction benefits that come from widespread mask wearing and its impact on airborne transmission outweigh these costs. Making this change will increase the likelihood that staff and students remain safe and in turn the likelihood that school as a whole can remain open and our daily routines maintained. This will be good for students who are clearly benefiting from being at school and also, we hope, families who will be facing their own challenges during the second period of lockdown.

Taking this significant step means that we are adding in a greater level of protection than required by the latest DfE guidance (read this [here](#)) and it feels right to us to be safer than required given the nature of the virus. It also means that the rest of our risk assessment can remain intact and doesn't require a further rewrite with the disruption this might present for staff, students and families.

This said, the gravity of the situation does mean that the key messages from our risk assessment need to be emphasised and I would ask again that you take a few moments to reiterate the importance of the measures below to your children over the weekend. We will also make a video available for your children to watch before school starts on Monday which will reinforce these points. More details on this will be sent to you tomorrow.



The key points are:

- Please remember to arrive at the appropriate time and enter and leave the school grounds by the correct gate (Year 10 and 11 the Ditchling gate, Year 7 - 9 Balfour gate)
- Please remember to socially distance (one metre plus when outside) yourself on your way to and from school and at breaks and lunchtimes. If you can't easily distance please keep your face covering on.
- Please do not wait for friends or siblings at the gate at the end of the day because it creates overcrowding near the gates and makes social distancing very difficult
- Please remember there can be no physical contact with other members of the community
- Please remember your face covering each day and make sure you wear it if you are travelling by bus
- Please remember good hand hygiene and sanitise or wash hands thoroughly at each opportunity during the day
- Please remember to follow the one way system at all times
- Please make sure you have your own equipment each day. This should include your whiteboard and pen which will be even more useful now

It may also help to show them [this poster](#) that is now around school which reminds them of the most effective ways to wear their mask.

Please can I also remind you that any student with COVID 19 symptoms **MUST** not attend school nor should anyone who has been asked to self isolate by NHS test and trace or is isolating following returning from a foreign country and needing to quarantine. The absence for students in these circumstances will be coded differently and school work will be set via the google classroom and the offsite learning documents can be found at the end of this email.

The only other additions to note are that meetings will now be virtual in the vast majority of cases and we would ask that you avoid entering the school grounds unless it is absolutely necessary to do so. In addition, in line with the DfE guidance we will have to curtail after school provision in the short term. Anything we are able to offer will be advertised to students in tutor time.

***Finally....***

Full time wearing of face coverings will present many challenges and I know you will need to work hard to explain to your children the importance of compliance with this measure and the



others listed above. As ever I am grateful to you for the effort that you make in this regard to help us to ensure that the school is a safe place for everyone to work and learn.

Please don't forget you can find all of our previous correspondence on our website [here](#).

Kind regards

William Deighan  
Headteacher

**Offsite Learning Documents**

For **Year 7** click [here](#)

For **Year 8** click [here](#)

For **Year 9** click [here](#)

For **Year 10** click [here](#)

For **Year 11** click [here](#)

**Safeguarding and school base contacts**

**Lennox**

Shelley Baker - [shelleybaker@varndean.co.uk](mailto:shelleybaker@varndean.co.uk)

Emma Sutton - [emmasutton@varndean.co.uk](mailto:emmasutton@varndean.co.uk)

**Angelou**

Sam Whiteman - [samwhiteman@varndean.co.uk](mailto:samwhiteman@varndean.co.uk)

Fiona Hall - [fionahall@varndean.co.uk](mailto:fionahall@varndean.co.uk)

Maria Rose - [mariarose@varndean.co.uk](mailto:mariarose@varndean.co.uk)

**Russell**

Abi Holder - [abigailholder@varndean.co.uk](mailto:abigailholder@varndean.co.uk)

Lorina Ventura - [lorinaventura@varndean.co.uk](mailto:lorinaventura@varndean.co.uk)



Maria Rose - [mariarose@varndean.co.uk](mailto:mariarose@varndean.co.uk)

**Turing**

Georgina Maltby - [georginamaltby@varndean.co.uk](mailto:georginamaltby@varndean.co.uk)

Donna Mills - [donnamills@varndean.co.uk](mailto:donnamills@varndean.co.uk)

Rachel Christy - [rachelchristy@varndean.co.uk](mailto:rachelchristy@varndean.co.uk)

**Ellis**

Sandra Knights - [sandraknights@varndean.co.uk](mailto:sandraknights@varndean.co.uk)

Caroline Ball - [carolineball@varndean.co.uk](mailto:carolineball@varndean.co.uk)

Donna Mills - [donnamills@varndean.co.uk](mailto:donnamills@varndean.co.uk)

Our safeguarding team will be contactable **during school hours** if you would like advice on an issue or wish to report a concern.

[safeguarding@varndean.co.uk](mailto:safeguarding@varndean.co.uk)

Vicky Anstiss (Designated Safeguarding Lead) - [vickyanstiss@varndean.co.uk](mailto:vickyanstiss@varndean.co.uk)

Kerry Tester - (Safeguarding Officer) - [kerrytester@varndean.co.uk](mailto:kerrytester@varndean.co.uk)

To access safeguarding advice (outside school hours) please contact Front Door for Families

Phone: 01273 290400 9am to 5pm Monday to Thursday, 9am to 4.30pm on Fridays

Out-of-hours: 01273 335905 (Emergency Duty Service)