



THE BUCKINGHAM SCHOOL

A SPECIALIST SPORTS COLLEGE

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01 September 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

As we rattle through the final days of the summer break, I am writing to you again about the measures in place in relation to Covid-19 when we return:

- Year 7 and 12 return on Friday 3rd September
- The rest of the school return on Monday 6th September

It's been a great summer in so many ways. For the first time in my life, I have seen an England football team compete in a major tournament final, and our Olympians did us proud. At the time of writing, as are our Paralympians. The school's exam results, published in August, were simply stunning. We have become accustomed to good results at Sixth Form level but, for the second year, Year 11 showed us the profits that can be made from hard work. We are so proud of all of our students because they prove to us every day – **Success is absolutely for All.**

We welcome your sons and daughters back this September ready to take our school to the next level. The Buckingham Way. With ambition, confidence, curiosity, empathy, integrity, resilience and respect our students will be guided to:

- Take personal responsibility for their actions
- Seek to improve themselves
- Respect the authority of the adults who are there to support them, guide them and teach them

It's going to be quite a year for our growing school, I'm sure. I will write to you soon solely about the school's vision for the year ahead and beyond, but this letter needs to focus on safely reopening the school. So, it's back to Earth, with an update on measures that will be in place in relation to coronavirus when our students return!

Testing Update

We have already contacted you about testing in school and arrangements are in place for those who have asked for it. Thank you to the majority of parents who were able to reply. The more information we have about cases locally, the more safely and smoothly we will be able to run our school.

We will continue to supply lateral flow tests to students until at least the end of September, and would be grateful if you would be kind enough to share results with the school, by completing the form which can be accessed by clicking on this link:

<https://forms.gle/aM2BjSNbK31Q1piG9>

The Buckingham School is concerned that every student should have the opportunity to attend school activities/obtain equipment, regardless of their financial circumstances. As such, it may be possible to subsidise those students who would otherwise be unable to attend trips/purchase items. Please feel free to write in confidence to finance@buckinghamsschool.org, if you wish to seek assistance, or obtain more information about Pupil Premium funding.



Hygiene

The following hygiene routines are remaining in place

1. **Good general hygiene** – our washroom facilities are now up to standard for hand-washing and we will continue our classroom sanitiser routines, desk-cleaning routines, and keeping corridor dispensers full. In addition, students should continue to bring their own sanitiser
2. **Good cleaning routines** – we recently changed our cleaning contractor and this has been positive. Additional “touch point” cleaning will continue during the day
3. **Ventilation** – subject to the outdoor temperature, windows will be kept open, but not at the expense of comfort. Coats must not be worn during lessons, assemblies, form time, etc. Doors will be propped open in classrooms, assemblies, etc
4. **Public Health advice** – we will continue to receive and act on this, particularly if Buckingham is hit by a spike in cases

Face Coverings

The Government has given some suitably woolly advice, with certain things advised or expected, even though they are not recommended. I believe we should keep matters simple for students and we should err on the side of being safe. Therefore:

1. **Masks must be worn upon entry to school by students (to show that they have one)**
2. **Masks must be worn by staff and students for entering assemblies, in dining room queues, in corridors between lessons and on school/public transport**
3. Staff and students may wear masks at other times, as they wish

Bubbles

We are no longer required to keep bubbles. Assemblies can restart and students can mix at lunch.

Positive Cases of Covid-19

- The school will not have to perform any contact tracing, for close contact of positive cases – NHS Test and Trace will be the only vehicle performing tracing
- **Self-isolation for close contacts of positive cases will not be necessary for any students (people under 18 years 6 months), unless they have symptoms themselves or, of have a positive test result of their own**
- **Close contacts will be *advised* to take a PCR test and will not need to self-isolate whilst they await the result**
- **Testing positive by a lateral flow test means that a PCR should be sought, self-isolating whilst awaiting the result – if this were to be negative then the LFT result would be overruled, and no further self-isolation would be necessary**
- The school will continue to have a risk assessment and method statements, as well as a contingency plan to introduce extra measures if we were to be advised or required to

Key things that will be in place around school

- One-way system (this is now a permanent measure)
- Year 7-9 / Years 10-13 dining areas (this is now a permanent arrangement)
- Hand-sanitiser provided in corridors and classrooms, with the hand-sanitising and desk-cleaning routines already established

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- Masks to be worn upon entry to school by students (to show that they have one), on entering and leaving assemblies, in dining room queues, in corridors between lessons and on school/public transport
- Staff and students may wear masks additionally as they wish
- Windows to be kept open if the temperature is appropriate, but not as before (no coats to be worn in lessons)
- Classroom doors to be propped open when room is in use

School Life

- Trips and visits can take place, including residential and even international trips
- Extra-curricular activities will resume

We are far from normal in so many ways, but we are where we are. Thanks to the vaccination programme success, we now enter a phase of discovering what it is like to live alongside Covid. We can expect further outbreaks, but will just have to hope that normal operation of the school is not compromised when they come. Unfortunately, data suggests that normal seasonal illnesses such as flu and norovirus are also on their way. Joy!

With best wishes



Mr A McGinnes

Headteacher

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