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29th November 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

## Department for Education advice concerning face coverings

I am writing to inform you that I received an e-mail from the Department for Education late on Sunday afternoon, informing me that face coverings "should" be worn by students, teachers and visitors in communal areas. The reason for this is a new variant of coronavirus which is causing some concern.

Over the last twenty months of the Covid crisis, I have received many last minute instructions and decrees from the government. In responding to them, I have consistently sought to apply our school's values, which are:

- Support
- Challenge
- Respect
- Resilience
- Relationships
- Responsibility

According to these values, it is clearly right for me to *support* the government in its attempts to manage coronavirus infections and *respect* their authority to do so.

It is also right, however, for me to *challenge* the way in which secondary school children have been subjected to repeated disruptions to their education while other sectors of society, such as cinemas, nightclubs, restaurants, etc can currently carry on without the same restrictions.

In addition, it is also right to point out the *resilience* which your sons have demonstrated over the last twenty months (which span three academic years) in dealing with a series of repeated restrictions and uncertainties. I commend their fortitude.

According to our values, moreover, it is clearly appropriate that I ask students, parents and teachers to take *responsibility* for following the government's advice that facemasks are "strongly advised", but not compulsory.

Thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely,

Niall Smith  
Headteacher