

Covid-19 Update, Monday 3 January 2022

Dear HBK Families

We wish all families a very happy new year and a great 2022!

The Government wrote to all schools yesterday to update their Covid-19 guidance. The main message was that from the start of the spring term, all students - unless they are exempt - should wear a face covering in lessons. We will therefore make this expectation part of our measures in school to limit the spread of the Coronavirus at this time. Students who are exempt should wear an orange lanyard, obtained from the SEND department, in Base Camp.

Please help us to meet this expectation by ensuring your child has a stock (that is, more than one) of face coverings to wear in school, alongside hand sanitizer to use regularly during the school day. As mentioned in the [HBK Update - Friday 17 December 2021](#), from January the school will no longer be able to provide face coverings free of charge, so a student's ParentPay account will be charged 50p whenever a face covering is provided for them. This is the same system that was in place last year when government guidelines required students to wear masks in school. This new expectation around face coverings applies from Wednesday 5 January until Wednesday 26 January, at which point the Government has said it will review the guidance.

The [HBK Update - Friday 10 December 2021](#), sent out prior to Christmas, outlined the arrangements for **On-Site Testing on Wednesday 5 January**. It stated that all students and staff would be required to wear a face covering as soon as they enter onto site, up until all the testing had been completed (by approximately 10am); this latest government guideline means that students will now need to continue to wear a face covering after 10am whenever they are inside school buildings, including in lessons. Please remind your child(ren) that as soon as they enter on site on Wednesday 5 January, they should head to the '**Testing Venue**' for their year group, as follows:

- Year 7 - Dance Studio (opposite the Food Court)
- Year 8 – Gym (entrance nearest the basketball court)
- Year 9 - Sports Hall (near side, by HBK Leisure)
- Year 10 – PAC (entrance used for purchasing food)
- Year 11 - Sports hall (far side, exit from exams)
- 6th Form – Old Dining Room in the House (enter via the patio door)

Students who had Covid-19 during the autumn term will **not** necessarily have been immune from contracting the new Omicron variant during the Christmas break. Therefore, we would greatly appreciate as many students as possible participating in the On-Site testing process. We understand that there may be a few students who are not participating in the testing (eg they have had Covid-19 during the Christmas holiday), so these students should head straight to their tutor room at 8.40am.

Furthermore, we strongly advise all students completing a **Lateral Flow test at home**, on Tuesday evening (4 January) or Wednesday morning (5 January), prior to the On-Site testing in school. Any asymptomatic student who tests positive at home will then be saved the inconvenience of needing to be collected from school once the test results have been processed.

Thank you very much for your support for the On-Site testing process at the start of term and for the change in our Covid-19 measures regarding the wearing of face coverings in school.

Kind regards

Mark Patterson
Principal