



# BORDEN GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Borden Grammar School  
Avenue of Remembrance  
Sittingbourne  
ME10 4DB

14 May 2021

Dear Parent / Carer,

You will, I am sure, be aware that from 17 May, the Government has announced further relaxations in line with Step 3 of the roadmap. It is important to note that schools have their own 'systems of controls' required through the DfE which still includes the use of hand sanitiser, cleaning, ventilation and "bubbles" amongst other things. Whilst these currently remain the same, the Government guidance now states the following,

*"Face coverings will no longer be recommended for pupils and students in classrooms or communal areas, in all schools. Face coverings will also no longer be recommended for staff in classrooms. The reintroduction of face coverings for pupils, students or staff may be advised for a temporary period in response to particular localised outbreaks, including variants of concern."*

At the time of writing, Swale is at 17 per 100,000 which is very low, and over two thirds of adults have now received at least one Covid vaccination. The risk presented by the virus locally is therefore significantly reduced. That said, evidence suggests there are still benefits to wearing masks, particularly where social distancing is not possible inside the building. We also know that new variants remain a risk and positive cases continue to occur in schools. Therefore, whilst this will be welcomed by many, there will be some students, parents and staff that may wish to continue wearing a mask.

Masks will therefore now become optional, both in and out of classrooms. Whilst optional, I still recommend that staff and students wear them in areas difficult to socially distance inside i.e. corridors. On the very rare occasions where students are mixing with other students outside of their bubble, inside the building, and are unable to socially distance, we would ask that they wear masks. The same will be true where staff or visitors are unable to properly socially distance in the building. All of this is, of course, subject to change.

On other matters, year 11 and 13 students will be entirely focused on their assessments that may contribute towards the final grades teachers submit to exam boards. However, this has also resulted in an unprecedented amount of time-limited additional work for teaching staff. This is why the school will finish early, at 2pm on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> June, and may also mean that teachers involved in the process have less capacity elsewhere. I would like to thank you in advance for your understanding.

I would also like to remind parents of our current policy on mobile phones for all students (including those in the 6th form). Whilst some schools ban mobile phones in school completely, we allow them at social times in social spaces. Corridors between lessons is not a social time nor a social space and therefore students should expect their phone to be confiscated if seen, with further escalation if confiscated multiple times. Please can I ask you to reinforce this reasonable and straightforward approach with your child.

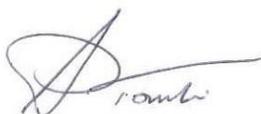


Headteacher: Mr A Tomlin MA NPQH

On a more positive note, we have had a number of student voice activities take place recently. I am very proud to say that our 17 x Year 12 mental health ambassadors are undergoing training next week, and it is great to see our board of Year 7 students who have shown commitment to our "Borden Values" each week. The school council have met, as have the senior team, and we have undertaken some very informative listening exercises with some of our students. These are the things that make our school a community and really show the dedication and caring nature of our students here at Borden.

Thank you again for your support over such a challenging time.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ashley Tomlin', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**Ashley Tomlin**  
**Headteacher**

Enc. Message from the Borden E-safety Team