

14th May 2021

Dear parents/carers,

Re: Face coverings from Monday 17th May 2021

Following the announcement from the Prime Minister on Monday, we have received revised guidance from the DfE regarding face coverings in school.

The guidance states that:

- From Monday 17th May face coverings are no longer being recommended for use by students in classrooms or in other communal areas, such as corridors and the canteen
- Face coverings are no longer being recommended for use by staff in classrooms
- The Government continues to recommend that face coverings should be worn by staff and visitors in situations outside of classrooms where social distancing is not possible
- **All other social distancing and COVID measures, including twice weekly testing for students, remain in place for now**

At John O'Gaunt, this means that **we will no longer expect to see face coverings worn by students or staff in classrooms**. We will continue to recommend that **staff and students continue to wear face coverings whilst indoors and moving around school**. Of course, your son/daughter may wish to continue to wear a face covering in classrooms and, if this is the case, we will support them in that decision.

All other social distancing and COVID control measures remain in place until further notice. I have included a slightly revised version of the 'Daily Routines' document at the bottom of this letter.

I would appreciate you taking a little time to talk to your son/daughter about these changes and remind them of the expectations within the daily routines too. Thank you for your support.

I hope that this makes sense but please do not hesitate to contact the school if you have any further queries. In the meantime, I hope that, like us, you are seeing this as good news and hopefully a sign that we remain on the path to returning to a more normal situation in the near future. Of course, should the guidance change, we will be in touch with you again.

Yours sincerely



Mr R Hawthorne
Head of School

John O'Gaunt School
Daily routines from 17th May 2021

DfE guidelines state that schools must balance the delivery of a full-time, broad and balanced curriculum to all students with stated 'systems of control' to protect public health. This document is not intended to be exhaustive but sets out the key principles for the operation of the school under this guidance. It should be read alongside the available guidance from GOV.UK and information from professional bodies such as unions, associations and Public Health England. Staff and students will receive health and safety briefings at the start of the new term and regular reminders will be given through assemblies¹ and the pastoral programme.

The school day:

Time	Activity	Notes
8.30-8.45	Arrival (split entrances)	Some staff out by buses/entrances to welcome and supervise. Tutors in Tutor bases by 8.30am. Students go straight to Tutor room via handwashing/sanitising
8.45-9.00	Tutor time/wellbeing	Tutor groups in Tutor bases. Year group assemblies possible but kept to a minimum
9.00-10.00	Period 1	As normal timetable – controlled entry and hand sanitising completed, work areas wiped down by students, staggered release at end of lesson and hands sanitised
10.00-11.00	Period 2	As normal timetable – controlled entry and hand sanitising completed, work areas wiped down by students, staggered release at end of lesson and hands sanitised
11.00-11.30	BREAK	Students allowed outside/to zoned areas OR canteen – no mixing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Y10/11 have access to canteen 11.00-11.15 • Y7/8/9 have access to canteen 11.15-11.30
11.30-12.30	Period 3	As normal timetable – controlled entry and hand sanitising completed, work areas wiped down by students, staggered release at end of lesson and hands sanitised
12.30-13.30	Period 4	As normal timetable – controlled entry and hand sanitising completed, work areas wiped down by students, staggered release at end of lesson and hands sanitised
13.30-14.10	LUNCH	Students allowed outside/to zoned areas OR canteen – no mixing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Y7/8/9 have access to canteen 13.30-13.50 • Y10/11 have access to canteen 13.50-14.10
14.10-15.10	Period 5	As normal timetable – controlled entry and hand sanitising completed, work areas wiped down by students, staggered release at end of lesson and hands sanitised. Staff present supervising until departure of buses at 3.25pm

General:

- These arrangements are temporary and, as per DfE² guidance, we are working towards normal operation as soon as possible
- These arrangements adhere to the 'systems of control' set out by DfE guidance and a full assessment of risk has been completed. Copies of these documents are available upon request

¹ Assemblies may be given via Microsoft Teams or recorded to aid social distancing

² Department for Education

- If the guidance changes on any aspect, these plans will be altered accordingly
- Attendance at school is mandatory and the usual expectations will apply (e.g. not taking time off during terms time, reporting absence etc.)
- Staff and students will be required to social distance when on the school site
- Students and staff must abide by hygiene and sanitisation rules and routines
- Where it is necessary to use supply staff and to welcome visitors to the school (such as peripatetic teachers), those individuals will be expected to comply with the school's arrangements for managing and minimising risk, including taking particular care to maintain distance from other staff and pupils
- Usual expectations of behaviour and attendance apply, including any addendums that have been put in place for COVID-19
- Students are in year group bubbles for the majority of their day. Where this is not possible, we will minimise mixing as far as possible
- The school will operate a one-way system for student movement and an implicit staggered release at lesson changeovers
- Assemblies will be kept to a minimum and will happen in year group bubbles only
- The school will follow government/PHE guidance if a confirmed case of COVID-19 occurs in school
- Students are required to attend in full school uniform
- Toilets will be open as normal and operate on a maximum capacity system – students should follow the signs on the door
- We have suspended the use of lockers
- All students will be given a health and safety briefings on a regular basis

Arrival and departure from school:

- Students are encouraged to cycle, walk, or drive into school rather than use the school bus services
- Where students must use bus services, we will adopt the relevant bus companies' risk assessment and abide by their rules for travel (e.g. use of masks etc.)
- Students will be supervised upon arrival to school and entry will be staggered and controlled
- For arrival **Y7/8/9** will use the main student entrance, **Y10/11** will use the far entrance gate by the Pod. The one-way system does not apply to arrival/departure
- Students must wash their hands and/or sanitise their hands before making their way to their Tutor room for the start of the school day and before leaving at the end of the day
- Parents are not permitted to wait on the school site at the start/end of the school day and must make an appointment if they wish to visit the school for any reason. As far as practicable, meetings will be held outside of the hours of the school day

Lesson routines:

- The school will operate under the approach of 'Hands, Face, Space'
- From 17th May 2021, new DfE guidance about face coverings has been issued and students and staff are no longer required to wear face coverings in classrooms. Until further notice, we continue to recommend that students and staff wear face coverings in corridors and other communal areas where social distancing is not possible
- As far as possible, classrooms will be organised to enable students to all face the front (this is not possible in some classrooms, e.g. computer rooms or DT workshops)
- Teachers should stay at the front as far as possible
- Where these things are not possible, good social distancing and hygiene practices will reduce risk of transmission (e.g. Catch-it, Kill-it, Bin-it)
- Seating plans in all classes (except PE/Drama) are compulsory and copies must be left when cover is set



- Hand sanitiser and anti-bacterial wipes will be provided for every classroom
- Where TAs are deployed, they should work with small groups of children where they are able to. If possible, this should be done in a separate space. If neither of these are possible, they should minimise movement around the room
- Students must stay seated at all times unless directed to move by their teacher
- Students are permitted to bring equipment into schools and staff and students can take books to/from home for homework/assessment etc.
- Students should avoid sharing equipment with other students. Teachers can lend equipment to students but should try and keep several separate sets of equipment and avoid using between classes without sanitising it

Start/end of lessons:

- Students will go straight into classrooms – there will be no queuing in corridors
- Teachers must be in rooms to greet students (from a safe distance) at the start of every lesson. Where teachers operate from multiple rooms and need to move between them, they will do their best to get there as quickly as possible
- Students must use hand sanitiser at the start and end of all lessons
- Students must wipe down their own work area, ideally at the start and end of every lesson. In specialist rooms (e.g. computer rooms) students must do this even if the previous class has wiped workspaces down
- Students must follow the one-way system in all circumstances (except for the start/end of the school day – see above). They must do this even when their next classroom is close by and the one-way route means they have to take a longer route³
- Bells will be used to signal the end of lessons
- An implied staggering of releasing classes will be in place and we ask staff and students to follow this as far as possible to aid the smooth transition between lessons

Break/Lunch:

- Each year group will be allocated an indoor and outdoor zone – these will be shared with students at the start of term. Apart from when they are accessing the canteen, students must stay in these zones **and are not permitted to mix with students from other year groups**
- Where weather permits, students will be asked to spend as much of their break/lunchtime in the outside zones⁴ and parents are asked to invest in a good coat (as per our uniform code) to ensure this can continue into colder months
- Where inclement weather does not allow the use of outdoor zones, students will be asked to go to their indoor zones instead. A ‘wet break’ bell will sound to alert students and staff if inside zones need to be used as well as emails/direct communications. The indoor/outdoor system operates on an either/or approach; students will be asked to be *either* outside *or* inside but **never both**
- Staff will be on duty in these zones to supervise and must move with students if the zones change from outside to inside or visa versa
- Students should not bring their own sports equipment (e.g. footballs) into school as these cannot be shared

³ This is for the safety of everyone and a key part of social distancing

⁴ Public health information shows this is safer as transmission of COVID-19 is reduced



PE/Music/Drama:

The school has given particular attention to these subjects due to the nature of the activities frequently undertaken in lessons. Specific guidance will be given to students; however, the following key principles will apply to these subjects:

PE:

- Students will be permitted to change for PE
- Equipment will not be shared between groups
- The curriculum will be planned to enable safe practice and social distancing to the best of our abilities. This will mean no contact sports will be permitted in the short term and activities that use equipment will be carefully managed.
- After school clubs are permitted under current guidelines but we will keep this provision under constant review and will only take place if it is deemed safe to do so
- We will follow the guidance set out by the DfE and, where it exists, that issued from the governing bodies of individual sports and the 'afPE'⁵

Music/Drama:

- There is an additional risk of infection in environments where singing, shouting, playing brass or wood instruments occurs, even if done at a distance. Therefore, large groups (e.g. large drama performances or choirs during school assemblies or events) undertaking such activities will not be permitted
- Singing, wind and brass instrument playing can be undertaken in line with this and other guidance, including guidance provided by the DCMS for professionals and non-professionals, available at [working safely during coronavirus \(COVID-19\): performing arts](#).
- Where students do play wood/brass instruments, they will never be seated face-to-face
- Music and drama lessons may take place outside to help prevent transmission
- Where students play instruments, sharing will be avoided as far as practicable and cleaning will take place between uses
- Teachers will avoid situations where distancing requirements are broken
- Drama performances will involve no contact and small 'performance zones' will be marked out for students to remain in during lessons
- Drama lessons may need to reduce the use of props/costume and where used these will be cleaned/allowed to lie fallow between uses
- Peripatetic lessons will be allowed to resume under this guidance and any other health and safety arrangements put in place for managing and minimising risk

⁵ 'afPE' is the 'association for Physical Education'