



# Biddenham

International School & Sports College

Principal: Mr David Bailey

Head of School: Ms Eleanor Grylls

4<sup>th</sup> January 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

We hope that you have managed to have some time to relax over the Christmas holiday and would like to wish you all a Happy New Year. Thank you to all of you who have sent your children to school for testing today, it is much appreciated, and will help keep school safer for everyone when we start back tomorrow, **Wednesday 5th January**.

## Health and Safety

Given the [government announcement](#) at the weekend regarding the new Omicron Covid-19 variant and increased safety measures, we felt it important to remind everyone about the safety measures that we have already implemented at Biddenham. The updated [government guidance](#) requires schools to **reintroduce the wearing of masks in classrooms as well as communal spaces**, whilst keeping other safety measures in place including good hygiene, appropriate cleaning, good ventilation and the importance of following public health guidance on testing, vaccination, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases of Covid-19. The new rules will be in place at least until 26th January, when there will be a government review. We will keep you updated as soon as we know of any changes.

- **Please make sure your child brings a face covering to school.** Students and staff should bring masks to school to wear in corridors, more confined spaces, close contact situations, such as queuing for food and in classrooms.
- At Biddenham we have continued to organise the school site into 'zones' with each year group having a designated social space.
- Break and lunchtimes are outside, except in very wet weather. The weather is getting colder so it is important to bring coats to school and take up the option of a school jumper.
- We are continuing with one way systems to minimise congestion in corridors.
- We are continuing to have slightly staggered starts, breaks and lunchtimes, again to avoid congestion.
- Our sanitising and cleaning routines have remained in place.

## Contact tracing and isolation

The [current guidance on contact tracing and isolation](#) has been recently updated. The new self isolation rules are as follows;

- The isolation period has been reduced from 10 to 7 days following 2 negative lateral flow tests taken 24 hours apart and not before day 6 of isolation. This applies regardless of vaccination status.
- The self isolation period should not be ended early if people are still experiencing symptoms.
- Close contacts who have been double vaccinated or aged under 18 years and 6 months do not need to self isolate, but should take a Lateral Flow test every day for 7 days.
- Close contacts aged 18 years and 6 months who are not fully vaccinated are legally required to stay at home and self isolate for 10 days.

## Vaccination

The government and public health advisors are continuing to encourage all eligible adults and children to take up the offer of the vaccine, including boosters. To book a vaccination, please visit: [Book or manage a coronavirus \(COVID-19\) vaccination - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#).

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## Exams

Year 11, 12 and 13 external exams and practice exams will all continue as planned. Students will need to bring masks with them as well as the usual equipment for the exams. Exam timetables were sent to students and parents before the Christmas break. Please check emails and google classrooms for further details.

## Travel to school

As always, we encourage all students to walk or cycle to school if at all possible as this is the healthiest option. Should students need to travel by public transport they will need to make sure that they wear masks in accordance with the recent government guidance. We ask that if a parent or carer is bringing their child to school they remain in their cars and use the drop off/pick up points marked. If you can avoid using the drive and drop your child and let them walk the rest of the way that would be helpful. **Any visits to the school should be made by appointment only**, to minimise the number of people that we have on site.

Our New Year message then is that we are absolutely committed to keeping our students in school and safe and that both their academic achievement and social development and wellbeing are paramount. This means that as a school community we will need to continue to be careful, considerate and vigilant with our safety measures, as we have been before. We are confident that with your support we will be able to rise to these challenges again and move into a brighter 2022.

Warm regards



Mr D Bailey  
Principal



Ms E Grylls  
Head of School