



26th January 2022

Dear Parents and Carers

Face Coverings in Educational Settings

As I am sure that you are aware, the Department for Education's operational guidance for schools and Covid-19 has now been updated to say that face coverings are no longer advised from 20th January in classrooms, and from 27th January in communal areas. The guidance also advises schools to have contingency plans in place and to this end, the Department for Education also published a [Contingency framework: education and care settings](#), which describes the principles of managing coronavirus in education and childcare settings.

I am very much aware that the use of face coverings can be an emotive issue and I have received emails from parents arguing from both sides of the debate. However, having carefully considered the guidance and reviewed the case numbers within the school community, we have taken the decision to remove the mandatory requirement for the use of face coverings from Monday 31st January onwards; the slight delay will provide us with the remainder of this week to work with students and staff to ensure that there is clarity regarding the measures that will remain in place from the start of February.

Although the mandatory use of face coverings will be removed, students and staff will still have the option to wear face coverings. The majority of teaching staff will continue to teach from the front of their classrooms and may choose to wear a face covering when moving around the room in close proximity to the students. I also anticipate that a good number of staff will wear face coverings in busy communal areas. Students may continue to wear face coverings in their classrooms and in busy communal areas and will be able to do so without prejudice. We will review these measures again in the February half term.

Parents and carers should be aware that schools are required to seek public health advice to manage localised outbreaks. This advice should be sought if case numbers reach the following thresholds (whichever is reached first):

- 5 children, students or staff; or
- 10% of children, students or staff

who are likely to have mixed closely, test positive for Covid-19 within a 10-day period.

In such instances, directors of public health may advise the re-introduction of face coverings in classrooms and communal areas (as well as other measures) on a temporary basis.

Vyners School
Warren Road, Ickenham,
Middlesex, UB10 8AB
Tel **01895 234342**

office@vynersschool.org.uk
www.vynersschool.org.uk

Mr Gary Mullings BA (Hons)
Headteacher

As mentioned previously, I fully understand that the use of face coverings is an emotive issue for some. However, I would like to stress that we continue to apply a number of measures to ensure the continuity of education at the school. With this in mind, I would like to re-emphasise the importance of twice weekly testing. It is clear that this has been incredibly successful at identifying positive staff and students before they arrive at the setting. I would like to take this opportunity to thank parents for the responsible attitude that has been taken since Christmas to home testing, and to ensuring that those that need to isolate, do so. In addition, it will continue to be important that all staff, students and visitors to the school exercise exceptional levels of hand and respiratory hygiene.

Whilst I fully understand that the measures set out in the framework will be met with a mixed response, I do wish to thank all parents and carers for their understanding and support and ask that they continue to have constructive conversations with their children about these matters.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gary Mullings', written in a cursive style.

Gary Mullings
Headteacher