



# Queen Mary's Grammar School

Headmaster: R J Langton, M A

15<sup>th</sup> October 2021

## Change in Covid-19 schools guidance from 18<sup>th</sup> October 2021

Dear parent/guardian

Walsall Council is urging all schools across the borough to reintroduce COVID-Secure measures from Monday 18 October, to put a stop to the rising cases of COVID-19 in the town. Walsall Council's Director of Public Health Stephen Gunther is asking this amid high COVID-19 case rates in Walsall and a gradual weekly increase in cases during the past month, particularly amongst school-age children. The full details and explanation from Walsall council can be found [here](#).

As a school, we have experienced low rates of positive PCR Covid-19 cases over the past few weeks. These measures are not as a result of an outbreak in school, but recognise that we need to play our part in the wider effort around transmission. Schools have been asked to consider their response, in the light of the recommendations, and we have consulted within the Mercian MAT in order to agree the following from Monday 18<sup>th</sup> October:

Control	Arrangements
Year group bubbles	We are not bringing back the zonal approach at this time. Students will move between lessons, but all indoor activities should be in consistent year groups. Students should try not mix outside of lessons with those from other year groups.
Face coverings	All staff, visitors and all pupils to wear a face covering in all communal areas unless <a href="#">exempt</a> . This includes when moving between classrooms and when in the Dining/assembly Hall (except when eating and drinking). Face coverings should also be worn when leaving the site at the end of the school day.
Teacher zones	We will make sure that teacher zones are marked out in classrooms and it is up to the discretion of the teacher to enforce this, recognising that this is difficult in practical subjects. Where it is not possible, the teacher will mitigate the risk (e.g. by wearing a face covering).
Staff meetings	These will move online
Events and gatherings	Key stage assemblies will move online Year group assemblies can go ahead, but with students wearing face coverings and sat in form groups We will not be able to run Speech Day on Thursday 21 <sup>st</sup> October and this will become a normal school day (as per the timetable). We will advise on an alternative date for this event.
Visitors	Visitors are to be minimised. Parents should not come onto site, unless it is an emergency and this needs to be by prior arrangements (not unannounced). The School requires 3 days' notice if a student has a medical appointment during school time, but it is requested that these are arranged (where possible) outside of the school day. All visitors (not parents) should be pre-agreed with the Headmaster
PE lessons	The students already come in their tracksuits on the day they have a games afternoon. This will continue. Students with a single PE or swimming lesson should continue as normal.
Break and lunch	The canteen will be sub-divided with screens At break, staff will use Café 6, Years 7-10 the main servery and Years 11-13 the outdoor pod At lunch, Years 7-9 will use the main servery, Y10-11 Café 6 and the sixth form the outdoor pod and the Bateman Room. The queuing system will be advertised to students; we will manage the numbers in the canteen
Start & finish times	The morning start to school is already staggered, with the site open from 8am. This will

	continue, with students not able to enter form rooms until 8.30am. Students should stick to consistent year groups and wear face coverings inside when waiting for form time. At the end of the school day, Years 7-9 are to use the pedestrian gate (next to the CPA) and Years 10-13 the main gate for exit. All students should wear face coverings on exit from the site.
School visits and activities	Visits will be assessed on a case-by-case basis Extra-curricular activities will continue, but will be in consistent year groups or have mitigating management (e.g. social distancing/face coverings) Rotas will be brought in for areas where there is mixing of students (e.g. the library Mon Y7, Tue Y8, Wed Y9, Thu Y10, Fri Y11) Sports fixtures against other school will be suspended until Friday 5 <sup>th</sup> November
LFTs	All students and staff are asked to continue the twice weekly lateral flow tests. Additional kits will be given out next week
Vaccination	We encourage all staff and students aged 16 and over to take up the offer of vaccination through their GP We will be hosting the NHS vaccination team for those aged 12-15 after half term and we encourage you to consent for this via the <a href="#">letter</a> on our website.
Close contacts	This hasn't changed. As with our guidance from September: Individuals are not required to self-isolate if they live in the same household as someone with COVID-19, or are a close contact of someone with COVID-19, and any of the following apply: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ they are fully vaccinated</li> <li>▪ they are below the age of 18 years and 6 months</li> <li>▪ they have taken part in or are currently part of an approved COVID-19 vaccine trial</li> <li>▪ they are not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons</li> </ul> <p>Please follow our <a href="#">school procedures</a> on this and communicate with us.</p>
Transport	The government has produced <a href="#">guidance on the use of transport</a> which is important to read and understand. Information on the Green Bus can be found on their <a href="#">website</a> .

The DfE have produced a [guide](#) for parents. A copy of our [risk assessment](#) is available on the school website, which includes our 'Outbreak Management Plan'.

The additional control measures in school continue to be:

1. **Ensure good hygiene for everyone** - wipes in classrooms, regular hand washing, promoting good respiratory hygiene
2. **Maintain appropriate cleaning regimes** – we are maintaining daytime cleaners
3. **Keep occupied spaces well ventilated** – continuing to keep windows and doors open. Promoting the principle of 'Think outside' to students, in terms of their movement between lessons and where they are at break time

We continue to expect the highest standards of behaviour and conduct of the students and it has been through their co-operation that we have been able to manage things so effectively over the past 18 months. I'm sure that you will take the time to speak to them about these changes and encourage good behaviours. I will write to you when there are any future changes.

Thank you for your ongoing support

Yours sincerely

Richard Langton  
Headmaster