

1st September 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

I thought it important to write to you to make you aware of how Ely College will approach the issue of face coverings. The government's position on the use of face coverings is as follows:

"Nationwide, the government is not recommending face coverings are necessary in education settings generally because a system of control, applicable to all education environments, provides additional mitigating measures.

Schools and colleges will have the discretion to require face coverings in communal areas where social distancing cannot be safely managed, if they believe that it is right in their particular circumstances."

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-in-education/face-coverings-in-education>

Ely College, as part of Cambridge Meridian Academies Trust, has adopted a position which we hope will ensure safety for the whole community and especially for those staff and students who we will be welcoming back in the next few days. We have been working all summer on plans to ensure the integrity of the year group zones, stricter cleaning regimes and controls on corridors, toilets and communal areas. We believe these controls negate the use of face coverings, but we are mindful that for some there will still be considerable apprehension associated with returning to school. We are also conscious that the science surrounding COVID and transmission rates is changing at pace and therefore we will be continually revisiting arrangements and protocols to ensure that safety of staff and students.

As a result, we are insisting for the **next two weeks that:**

- **Face coverings being mandatory on bus transport to and from school**
- **Face coverings not being worn in classrooms**
- **Face coverings being optional in communal areas of the school, such as corridors.**

At the moment the use of coverings in communal areas will be optional however, we will monitor the movement of students closely over the next fortnight, and if we feel that compulsory use of face coverings is necessary then we will notify you immediately.

Face coverings in lessons should not be worn but again, to help alleviate fears, we do recognise that if any parent wishes to discuss an underlying health condition etc. then they should contact their Senior Tutor to discuss this further. I will need to sign off each individual request to wear a face covering in classrooms, with clear expectations and a date agreed to review the continued use. Visors should be the first option for students if this reassurance is required.

I hope that you feel that we are adapting the government's advice in a sensible and reasonable way and that we are putting the whole community at the heart of our decision making. If you wish to

discuss your child wearing a face covering in lessons, please contact your child's **Senior Tutor** in the first instance.

Today marked my first day as Principal of Ely College. It has been wonderful to meet the staff in person and escalate our plans to welcome students back into class by the end of this week. We are all very much looking forward to getting the term underway.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'S Warburton', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Simon Warburton
Principal