

## **Parent email: update to covid-19 protocols 14 Sep 2020**

Dear Parents and Carers,

### Update to our Covid-19 protocols

As the R (infection) rate in the UK has risen above 1.0 and nationally the 'rule of 6' has been introduced, at Uckfield College we are updating our protocols. The key changes for students are:

#### Masks / visors

From Tuesday 15th September, **all students will wear masks or visors at the following times:**

- When **inside the College buildings**, moving between lessons and entering/exiting classrooms and the SFSA (Sixth Form Study Area).
- When **queuing up** for the Refectory/Sixth Form Cafe. They can remove their mask to eat and drink.
- When **going into and during assemblies** (which will be for a section of a year group at a time and socially distanced) in the Hall or Theatre.
- Sixth formers also need to wear masks **in the Common Room**, unless there is enough room to socially distance from one another.

Students can remove their masks or visors when they are in their lessons (if they are in the Sixth Form, this includes when they are at their seat working silently in the SFSA) but should put them back on again before they leave for their next class. Students have already been asked to bring in their masks every day.

Students do not need to wear masks or visors when they are outside. Sixth formers must use the hand sanitiser and their own pen when signing out.

As stated in an email to parents during the summer holidays, students' masks / visors must be suitable for a professional school environment. No inappropriate images or symbols. Scarves / snoods etc. are not allowed.

#### Exemptions

If students have an exemption from wearing a mask for medical reasons, please forward a note / email from their GP to the year group PAL, who will provide them with an exemption card.

#### Hand sanitiser

We are asking all students to bring their own hand sanitiser and use it before they take their mask off and before they put it back on again, as this is more hygienic than everyone sharing the same bottle.

#### The other protocols remain

Students still need to:

1. Have good respiratory hygiene (Catch it, bin it, kill it)
2. Wash their hands frequently
3. Avoid touching their faces
4. Not have physical contact with other people or their possessions
5. Keeping a social distance with students from other year groups

No single step, including masks, will stop transmission. It is important that we do all of these things to reduce the spread of infection.

We will still:

- Clean surfaces
- Maximise ventilation
- Support test, track and trace
- Liaise with health professionals, Public Health and the DfE

We want our College community to be as protected as possible from illness and also from further possible school disruption. We also do not want students to have lots of cover lessons because some of their teachers have symptoms.

Please also ensure that you and your families are following the latest rules about no groups of more than six people meeting. When meeting friends, they should do all the things they can to reduce transmission (no contact, social distancing, excellent hygiene etc.). We advise that a sleepover (even one with fewer than six) should not happen as the government advice is that all the people staying in another household should socially distance and children sleeping in the same room will be breathing each other's air all night and it is impossible for them to not end up touching the same surfaces in that situation. If you are giving other students / children a lift in your car, please apply the same rules as for a taxi and wear masks and ventilate the car as much as possible, within reason.

If we do need to send a student home and for parents to get their child tested, please could parents do both of these as quickly as possible. We also need students who have symptoms of other illnesses to be collected promptly as we do not want our student services area to fill with students.

We do appreciate that getting a test is difficult. We have found that people trying to book a test are told there are none, however, if they try again an hour later, they do sometimes get one, so please keep trying.

Thank you, as always, for your support.

Yours sincerely,

Hugh Hennebry  
Principal