



4th November 2020

Dear Parent and Carer

As you are aware the Government has today released guidance for education and childcare settings: new national restrictions from 5th November 2020. Below I have outlined what these changes mean at Axe Valley Academy alongside some important reminders.

Symptoms of Coronavirus

If you have recent onset of any of the most important symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19):

- a new continuous cough
- a high temperature
- a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of smell or taste (anosmia)

you and your household must isolate at home: wearing a face covering does not change this. You should [arrange to have a test to see if you have COVID-19](#) and inform the school immediately. **You must not come to school.**

Extra-Curricular Sports Clubs and Fixtures

As we outlined earlier in the week, we had already decided to suspend all extracurricular clubs and fixtures for the period of new national restrictions which has been confirmed in the guidance today. This does not extend to Period 6 for Year 11 which will continue.

The PE department will continue to offer sport in the timetables PE lessons in line with the return to recreational Team sport framework and in line with all of the Government guidance. Thorough risk assessments have been undertaken for all activities and hand hygiene will remain paramount. We will continue to ask students to wear their PE kit on PE days as their uniform over the period of new national restrictions. If you have any specific questions about PE lessons for your child please don't hesitate to contact Mr Owen, Subject Leader PE, dowen@axevalley.devon.sch.uk.

We'd like to remind you that students must wear their Axe Valley Academy PE kit which we will extend to plain black sports leggings and plain black jogging bottoms throughout this time. Matching and coloured tracksuits and non-Axe Valley Academy sports clothing is not permitted and will be treated as a uniform violation. School jumpers, blazers and Black coats can continue to be worn alongside PE kit.

Visitors to School

We will be restricting all visits to the setting to those that are absolutely necessary. This means we will need to suspend parental visits and tours and ask that these are moved to virtual meetings or telephone calls.

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Clinically Extremely Vulnerable Students

The Government guidance states that most children originally identified as clinically extremely vulnerable no longer need to follow original shielding advice. As such, if you are a parent of a clinically extremely vulnerable child, it is advisable to speak to your child's GP or specialist clinician if you haven't already done so to understand whether your child would still be classed as clinically extremely vulnerable. We would ask that any parents this affects regularly update us on the advice they are being given so that we can offer the appropriate support.

Face Coverings

The Government guidance has changed significantly today and the new guidance below should be implemented in schools as soon as possible. Face coverings should be worn by adults and children aged 11 and above when moving around the premises, outside of classrooms or activity rooms such as corridors and communal areas where social distancing cannot easily be maintained unless they are exempt.

To be clear, staff and students should always wear a face covering in the following situations:

- When travelling on school buses or public transport
- When travelling between lessons, both inside and outside
- When queueing for lessons
- When in indoor communal spaces such as canteens
- Students are welcome to remove their face coverings when they are seated in their lessons or when outside during break or lunch time where social distancing can be maintained. If they feel more comfortable to wear them, they can.

Below is the quoted section of the new DfE guidance released today:

'In schools where pupils in year 7 and above are educated, face coverings should be worn by adults and pupils when moving around the premises, outside of classrooms, such as in corridors and communal areas where social distancing cannot easily be maintained. This was already the case for pupils in year 7 and above, and staff and visitors for those schools that were in areas where local alert level 'high' and 'very high'.

Some individuals are exempt from wearing face coverings and we expect adults and pupils to be sensitive to those needs.

Face coverings should also be worn by pupils in year 7 and above when travelling on dedicated school transport to secondary school or college.'

When considering this change we must impress importance of the safe wearing of face coverings. All students received training on the safe wearing of face coverings in September which we would again like to remind parents and carers of. We will reinforce this regularly at school.

What is a face covering?

- A face covering covers your nose and mouth while allowing you to breathe comfortably and should be secured to the head with ties or ear loops

How do I wear a face covering?

- You should use hand sanitiser before putting a face covering on
- Avoid wearing it on your neck or forehead
- Avoid touching the part of the face covering in contact with your mouth and nose
- You should use hand sanitiser before removing your face covering
- Only handle the straps, ties or clips
- Do not give it to someone else to use
- You should use hand sanitiser after removing your face covering

What do I do with my face covering once I have taken it off?

- Once removed, store reusable face coverings in a plastic bag until you have an opportunity to wash them. If the face covering is single use, dispose of it in a residual waste bin. Do not put them in a recycling bin

Below is the quoted section of the updated DfE guidance today:

'Safe wearing of face coverings requires cleaning of hands before and after touching – including to remove or put them on – and the safe storage of them in individual, sealable plastic bags between use. Where a face covering becomes damp, it should not be worn and the face covering should be replaced carefully.'

On the basis of current evidence, in light of the mitigating measures education settings are taking, and the negative impact on communication, face coverings will not generally be necessary in the classroom even where social distancing is not possible. There is greater use of the system of controls for minimising risk, including through keeping in small and consistent groups or bubbles, and greater scope for physical distancing by staff within classrooms. Face coverings can have a negative impact on learning and teaching and so their use in the classroom should be avoided.'

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own>

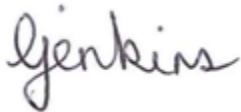
In summary

- Do not come to school if you have any symptoms of coronavirus
- Face coverings should be worn on dedicated school transport
- Face coverings should be worn by all staff and students in school outside of the classroom
- Extra-curricular clubs and fixtures have been suspended
- Visitors to school site have been restricted to those only absolutely necessary

I'd like to thank all of our parents and carers for their ongoing support and kindness. I want to reassure our parents we are responding thoughtfully, thoroughly and rapidly to the evolving situation and we are happy to discuss any concerns or questions parents have at this worrying time.

I feel incredibly lucky to be a part of this community and keeping our staff, students and families as safe as we can is paramount. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you would like any help, support, guidance or any questions answered.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "L Jenkins". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned to the left of a vertical line that extends downwards from the "Yours sincerely" line.

Laura Jenkins
Headteacher