

21<sup>st</sup> January 2022

Dear Parent/Carer,

I hope you all have had a good week so far even though the cold weather has joined us in force! The cold will be with us for the majority of next week too, so please do ensure that your child has appropriate warm clothing.

Alongside other parliamentary 'matters', the Prime Minister's announcement on Wednesday afternoon in regards to Omicron, issues for schools and face coverings are as follows:

- All Plan B measures will be removed in England, with a full return to Plan A by Thursday 27 January.

In education and childcare settings, this means:

- From Thursday 20th January, face coverings are no longer recommended in classrooms and teaching spaces for staff and students in year 7 and above. They were introduced in classrooms at the start of the spring term as a temporary measure. From Thursday 27 January, face coverings are no longer recommended in communal areas for staff and students in year 7 and above.

This decision comes in response to national infection data showing the prevalence of COVID-19 to be on a downward trajectory. Whilst there are some groups where cases are likely to continue rising, it is likely that the Omicron wave has now peaked nationally. There remains significant pressure on the NHS but hospital admissions have stabilised, and the number of patients in Intensive Care Units (ICU) remain low and are falling.

The virus is still with us, and continuing with proportionate protective measures remains vital to protect education. Local directors of public health are able to recommend the use of face coverings in communal areas, across their area only, where DfE and public health experts judge the measure to be proportionate due to specific health concerns.

From our Preston Manor perspective, as a school, we will still be recommending the use of face coverings in communal areas. There are still a high number of cases and still a high number of deaths related to COVID and we want to ensure that we continue to do all we can in order to keep our school community safe.

This week had two parent information evenings - continuing our extremely strong approach to maintaining our parent partnership. On Tuesday, the Lower School had an evening of questions and information for Years 1-6 parents and on Wednesday, we had a similar event for parents at the Upper School. I wanted to pass my personal thanks to our parents who were able to join us on these evenings. Your feedback, your thoughts and your support are invaluable in helping us all move forward together. We all look forward to seeing you at our next evenings in the very near future.

Next Wednesday (26th January), our Year 8s at the Upper School will be having a 'drop down day' looking and working at resolution, commitment and team building. I will give an update on this when



I write to you all next week. We also have the Year 11 Careers Fair and Year 13 Parents Evening on the same day too! It is already looking like another busy and exciting week at our school.

I know that many of you have faced difficult and challenging times both personally and professionally over the last couple of years, so I would like to leave you with a quote from the American poet Walt Whitman that I came across: *'Keep your face always towards the sunshine, and shadows will fall behind you'*.

Wishing you all a safe and peaceful weekend.

Yours faithfully

**RUSSELL DENIAL**  
*Executive Headteacher*