

Our Ref: PRC/JYD

28 June 2021

Dear Parents/ Students,

I hope this letter finds you well.

In line with many other places, the school is still experiencing disruption due to Covid 19. We are responding robustly and safely, but also proportionately and are doing so with close liaison from Public Health. The percentage of positive cases in relation to the current in school student population is still actually relatively small (1%) but we understand that the associated disruption to education comes from the close contacting tracing we have to do. Huge thanks to all of you for your understanding, especially those who have had multiple isolation periods.

For transparency, the following table gives the number of cases we had last week. I will continue to update parents on cases on a weekly basis until the end of term.

New Year 10	New Year 11	New Year 13
4	1	9

The following message on face coverings is taken directly from Friday's Local Authority daily update all Newcastle Headteachers receive.

### Face Coverings

*Understandably, there are lots of questions about face coverings in secondary schools, given the rise in positive cases in the city. Obviously, it's under review all the time, but here is the current message from the Director of Public Health:*

- *As **transmission continues to be principally within the community – rather than any specific evidence of school settings as the key driver of spread – we continue to follow DfE guidance regarding face masks within schools.***
- *If there is evidence or concern about transmission within a particular school environment, then the local authority (public health and education teams) will work with that school and PHE to decide on additional measures to the guidance. This may be done through assurance or outbreak control meetings.*

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*Just for context, it's worth knowing that in the last week, there were 25% more cases aged 20 and 21 than there were in the entire school population. More than half of all cases in Newcastle are aged between 18 and 30.*

At Gosforth we are currently being pragmatic by **going beyond the DfE guidance** and ensuring that students wear face coverings (unless exempt) at the change of lessons and in communal areas. We also fully support those students and staff who still wish to wear them in classrooms. We will continue to review this with the support of Public Health.

I appreciate that the current situation is somewhat unsettling for all of us, but please be reassured we are doing everything we can to make the next four weeks as “normal” as possible as we end the 20-21 academic year. As always **parents can support by ensuring their child follows all current regulations**. Finally, huge credit to the students who have shown resilience and flexibility throughout.

Yours sincerely,  
Preit Chahal  
Principal