



# West Hatch High School

## A Specialist Business and Enterprise School

Headteacher: Mr D Leonard BSc (Hons), Med

High Road, Chigwell, Essex, IG7 5BT

Tel: 020 8504 8216 Fax: 020 8559 2695

Email: [admin@westhatch.net](mailto:admin@westhatch.net) Website: [www.westhatch.net](http://www.westhatch.net)

12<sup>th</sup> May 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

As you will undoubtedly have seen, on Monday the Prime Minister announced changes to the requirement to wear facemasks in schools. As a result we have adapted our Risk Assessment, which I will publish on the website shortly. I have outlined the school's position below.

From Monday 17<sup>th</sup> May students will no longer be required to wear face coverings around the school, in corridors, in lessons or in other communal areas. Staff will continue to be asked to wear face coverings in communal areas but not within the classroom unless they are supporting individual students.

Should a student wish to wear a face covering at any time throughout the school day they will be permitted to do so; we understand many of our students will be concerned about this change to policy and may wish to continue to wear a mask.

Despite the lifting of restrictions, students will still be required to wear a facemask before being treated in the medical room, even those with exemption cards (unless their medical reason restricts them in doing so). This is due to the nature of first aid and the very close contact staff are required to have with students. If a student refuses to put a facemask on we will not be able to treat them in first aid and we will ask their parents to collect them and support them at home until they are well enough to return to school.

All visitors will continue to be expected to wear a face covering when they enter the school. Staff may also ask a student to put on a face covering if they are having face to face meetings and a 2 metre distance cannot be maintained; they will be able to provide students with a covering if this is the case.

Children and young people aged 11 and over must still wear a face covering on public transport. In accordance with advice from PHE, they must also wear a face covering when travelling on dedicated transport to secondary school or college. This does not apply to children and young people who are exempt from wearing face coverings.

Please note, the reintroduction of face coverings for pupils, students or staff may be advised for a temporary period in response to particular localised outbreaks, including variants of concern.

I know for many this will be a relief, but a significant number of our community will be concerned by this change in direction from the Government. I am equally concerned that the Government has not followed the requests of the SAGE committee for a continuation of the face covering policy in schools; I will continue to monitor the situation closely. However, since the start of the pandemic we have always followed the advice from the DfE and will continue to do so until restrictions are completely lifted and we can return to school as normal.

Finally as a result of student's not having to wear face masks in school, and with restrictions lifting and closer contact between people outside of family bubbles, it has now become even more important to carry out the lateral flow testing. Please ensure your children are testing every 3 -5 days to help us keep everyone safe and in school.



Please pass on my thanks and gratitude to your children who have once again adapted to a challenging situation and behaved exceptionally well, wearing masks throughout the school day as requested since we returned in March.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Daniel Leonard". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Daniel Leonard  
Headteacher