



LIGHTHOUSE
SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

To Headteachers at LSP Secondary Schools

Dear colleagues,

Last week our board considered the DfE's [operational guidance](#) for full reopening. The announcement that schools will return to full provision from the week beginning 8th March is very good news indeed but the risks from coronavirus have not disappeared (indeed, we know that the Kent variant is more infectious) and our reopening is governed by even tighter guidance from the DfE and a consequent updating of our own Risk Assessments. Thank you for the work that you are doing with your staff and governors to consult on those revised Risk Assessments to ensure that they reduce the risks of reopening and give assurance to pupils, parents and colleagues.

There are a number of enhancements that we have asked you to implement. These are time-limited for the period between 8th March and Easter and will then be reviewed. The most visible change is that secondary school pupils will be required to wear face masks in class in situations where they are not able to maintain social distancing (defined as 2 metres). We are also requesting that staff wear masks in class when they are not able to distance themselves from pupils and other adults although to improve communication they may remove them when at the front of class, separated by 2 metres and directly addressing the class.

The DfE guidance on masks is based on advice received from Public Health England. Wearing of masks is the second of the seven main controls under which we are permitted to open the school. The advice from PHE and the DfE is very clear and our Trustees carry a legal liability and consequent public duty to act on it. I am therefore asking you to take every reasonable step to ensure that there is compliance to these new tighter mitigations, especially the wearing of mask, when your schools reopen next Monday.

There are exceptions relating to medical situations and I know that you will make provision so that pupils and staff with health-related reasons for not wearing a mask are exempted from the requirement. I also ask that you ensure that no pupil is deprived of education through non-compliance although my expectation is that education could be delivered, if absolutely necessary, outside of a classroom environment.

I think that we can be confident of overwhelming support from colleagues, pupils and their families in delivering these tighter controls as, although it involves some sacrifice of both comfort and personal freedom, these actions collectively work to ensure the safety of others. To my mind, this is exactly the ethos of service and community that we stand for as schools and as a Trust.

Yours sincerely,

Chief Executive: Mr G J Lewis MA

Lighthouse Schools Partnership. Registered address: St Mary's Road, Portishead, Bristol BS20 7QR
Tel: 01275 841396 Email: enquiries@lsp.org.uk Website: www.lsp.org.uk

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