



# Spalding High School

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**Headmistress Mrs M Anderson B.Ed**

29<sup>th</sup> November 2021

Dear parents, carers and students,

The Department for Education has issued new operational guidance for schools following the Prime Minister's announcement of new national measures to address the Covid-19 Omicron variant. These measures are "temporary" and "precautionary, while the variant is tracked and assessed." The new guidance to schools remains subject to change as the situation develops.

*The new government measures are in italics as follows:*

***Face Coverings:** Face coverings should be worn in communal areas in all settings by staff, visitors and students in Y7 and above, unless they are exempt. Students in Y7 and above should continue to wear face coverings on public and dedicated school transport, unless they are exempt.*

High School students and staff have continued to wear face coverings in the crowded, enclosed and poorly ventilated corridors and stairwells at lesson change and when in the canteen. The sixth form are required to wear face coverings in the common room and study room.

***Contact tracing and isolation:** The [current guidance on contact tracing and isolation](#) remains in place. In addition to these, any suspected or confirmed close contacts of the Omicron variant will be asked to isolate for 10 full days regardless of vaccination status or age. NHS Test and Trace will work with the positive cases and/or their parents to help identify close contacts. All individuals who have been identified as a close contact of a suspected or confirmed case of the Omicron variant, irrespective of vaccination or age, will be contacted directly and required to self-isolate immediately and asked to book a PCR test. Close contacts will be notified by the Local Health Protection Team or NHS Test and Trace if they fall into this category. **For everyone else, isolation rules are unchanged.***

This is a significant change to the self-isolation rules for the under 18s. We are hopeful that this is, as the government have said, a temporary and precautionary measure whilst the new variant is assessed. If students are identified of the need to self-isolate for 10 full days as a result of being a close contact of an Omicron positive case, we will provide high quality work from subject teachers via Teams, the VLE or email systems. The High School continues to identify and notify school based close contacts and offer them LFD tests for additional peace of mind.

***Vaccination:** All eligible staff and students aged 12 and over are encouraged to take up the offer of the vaccine, including boosters. Vaccines are our best defence against COVID-19. They help protect young people and adults, and benefit those around them. Vaccination makes people less likely to catch the virus and less likely to pass it on. To book a vaccination, please visit: [Book or manage a coronavirus \(COVID-19\) vaccination – NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#).*

## **Changes to the red list for international travel to England**

*Individuals arriving in England from red list countries must follow the [red list](#) rules.*

*South Africa, Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Namibia and Zimbabwe moved onto the red list at 12pm Friday 26 November. Angola, Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia were added to the red list 4am Sunday 28 November.*

In addition, schools received notification on Friday afternoon that we are to conduct an **on-site test of students as they return to school in January**. No details were given with regards to how this is to be managed but it would appear inevitable that schools will have to have a staggered return. As soon as we receive further information, we will share our plans with you.

Yours sincerely

M K Anderson  
Headmistress