



Dear Parents

It is with great joy that I include a 'coming back to school' document called [Autumn 2020 @Bedford](#). In it, you will find everything you need to get ready for next week and I hope you find this useful. We are very much looking forward to seeing the boys – and, especially, welcoming all new boys to the school: we wish them all a wonderful time with us and know they will receive a very warm Bedford School welcome from the current community.

This joy is also mingled with the realism of the moment, of course, and we have spent hours putting together plans and risk assessments for next term. We go into the term ahead with open eyes as well as open hearts. In that vein, I offer a few points below in addition to the *Autumn 2020 @Bedford* document.

We have obviously worked hard to try to make the school site as safe as possible for boys and staff to return and we will do all we practically can to bring those plans to fruition; but it is obviously hard to legislate against things that happen off-site. As individuals, we have all been interpreting (the not entirely consistent) Government guidelines in our various ways in the last couple of months, and this is of course personal choice. I hope you will not mind my asking you to remember that, once we have gone back to school, the boys will (happily!) be reintegrated into a much wider community than they have probably experienced recently; so all you can do, please, to help them to conform to Government guidelines (and act in a sensibly safe way) *outside* school is doubly important for the welfare of all boys.

Most obviously, please do err on the side of caution (and keep them at home) if they are not feeling well; and do please complete the correct quarantine and isolation periods, as and when necessary.

Last night new guidelines were issued by the Government concerning the use of face coverings in secondary schools. At the moment this is only mandated in those schools within locally locked-down areas but this is likely to change and may well do so quickly. We will be discussing this in detail today but felt it was important to send you the document this morning as the start of term is fast approaching. We will be in touch again in the coming days should anything change with regards to requirements for boys. Please do keep an eye out for further updates.

You will see from the *Autumn 2020 @Bedford* document that we have responded to your comments around the security of computers by moving all lockers into the various year group zones, so that all boys will have use of their own locker. Boys will also have a designated Tutor room, and there will be no un-booked visitors on site, so the boys will have every opportunity to keep their possessions secure. After continual review over the summer break, we have also decided that sport this term will consist (essentially) of a normal winter sport programme. The most prevalent of those sports, rugby, has been cleared as a sport by the Government using its new format 'ready-4-rugby' and (in conjunction with a number of other schools) we are confident that we can build enjoyable, energetic and competitive skills sessions around this format. It looks a fun game; and it is so important that the boys have plenty of fresh air and exercise, which they will certainly get out on the field. For further information, please visit the England Rugby website [here](#).

The term ahead is uncharted waters for all of us. As a management team, we will initially be holding reviews (every evening) of the day gone by. Your own channels of communication remain via Tutor and Housemaster as first port of call, please. We expect to receive plenty of comment initially, so please bear with us as we embed the procedures. We will also draw up an FAQ page; and if you have queries before term even starts, then you can contact us at autumn2020@bedfordschool.org.uk and we will try to get back to you as quickly as possible. Our focus for the next few days will be to complete the training for all staff and make final preparations on site, as we welcome new staff, new boys, quarantined boarders and various rugby skills sessions back to school.

I look forward to seeing you all soon.

With kind regards indeed,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Hodgson', with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

James Hodgson
Head Master