



**EMMANUEL COLLEGE**  
*Emmanuel Schools Foundation*

3 January 2022

Dear Parents, Carers and Students

I hope this finds you well and having had an enjoyable and restful break. We return tomorrow as planned, picking up where we left off in December by taking a sensible but positive approach to dealing with COVID. We know how important education is to young people and as such, remain committed to doing all in our power to ensure that the students of Emmanuel College get the best possible opportunities over the next two terms. We know, however, that the new Omicron variant is highly transmissible and that case rates in Gateshead are now very high. This means that we must be particularly careful to ensure we do all we can to avoid getting COVID ourselves and passing it on to others.

As we return tomorrow, students should be aware that:

1. Mask wearing in communal areas **and in classrooms** is now compulsory (unless students are exempt). Students will need to bring a face covering with them from tomorrow morning. This is in line with new government guidance that has been released over the past couple of days. The government have emphasised that this is temporary measure and will be reviewed by the end of the month.
2. We must maintain appropriate distance where we can. We know that this is not always possible, but students should do all they can to respect the space of other people.
3. Students should continue to wash their hands regularly and use hand sanitiser as appropriate.
4. Lessons and the new co-curricular programme will continue as planned but large gatherings will continue to be avoided, including the weekly College celebration which will continue to be online.
5. We are asking that visitors do not come into College unless it is essential that they do so, but we recognise that there are times when a face-to-face meeting is important and so will continue to use our best judgement in this matter.
6. Testing will take place in school for all students for whom consent has been provided. We would like all students to be tested in school if possible, so that we can do all we can to avoid transmission in school.

There are no plans at present to ask students, other than those who have tested positive for COVID, to work from home. However, it is likely that staffing pressures will require us to be creative about how we provide education over the coming weeks. I shall be meeting daily with senior colleagues to monitor the impact that COVID is having on our provision and will keep all parents and students informed of any changes that we intend to make. Sending students home to work remotely will be the last resort.

With sincere thanks for your support in these matters,

M Waterfield  
**Principal**