

4 October 2017



Dear Parent/Guardian

Your child is about to start a teaching unit of Rugby in PE lessons. The nature of these lessons will involve progressive learning towards a full version of the game, involving physical contact through tackling. As physical contact is involved the College would strongly recommend that mouth guards (gum shields) be used for PE and school practices in rugby and that parents should provide these as part of a student's essential PE kit. If your child is then selected to play for the school team, the wearing of the mouth guard will be mandatory.

Teachers will, at the start of a lesson, remind pupils that any protective equipment provided by parents/guardians should be used to reduce the severity of any possible injury whilst participating in contact sports lessons and events.

It is widely recognised that the use of mouth guards (gum shields) during such sports, be it in PE or school matches, effectively reduces the severity of oral injuries.

To ease managing this situation and to prevent undue disruption to lessons the College will assume that gum shields will be provided by parents/guardians and worn by students. Whilst the staff will ask students to wear a gum shield at the beginning of every rugby lesson, the students must take responsibility for wearing the gum shield when required. Student cooperation is therefore essential for this safety measure to be managed.

The following information may help you to make a decision on which mouth guards to choose.

The British Dental Association states that anyone engaged in contact sports should wear a well-made mouth guard to reduce the risk of injury to teeth, bone and lips and also reduce the risk of concussion. They would therefore recommend that you should get a custom made mouth guard designed by a dentist. The costs of these can vary significantly and you should ask your dentist for more information.

Alternatively you can purchase 'fit it yourself' type mouth guards from most sports shops and whilst these may not give the same level of protection as those fitted by dentists, they are considerably cheaper and will offer some degree of protection. Thank you for taking the time to read this letter and if you require any further guidance please do not hesitate to contact me at the school.

Yours sincerely

Mr M Goode
Head of PE

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