

7th October 2019

Dear Parent/Carer,

Re: Gum Shields

We would like to take this opportunity to remind parents and carers of the clear safety benefits of wearing gum shields.

Regardless of the degree of care and planning that we put into safeguarding our students, it is impossible to remove all risk of injury when young people are taking part in physical activity, which is why we highly recommend that children wear them when participating in contact sports.

Well-fitting mouth guards can buffer damage to the teeth from the types of physical contact that invariably arise during sports like hockey and rugby. Mouth guards can also act as a barrier between teeth/braces and the cheeks, and between the lips and tongue, thereby minimising the risk of soft tissue damage.

Can my child's PE teacher recommend or check a mouth guard?

Unfortunately, teachers, coaches and referees are not qualified to offer advice or check the fitting of mouth guards. This responsibility remains with parents and carers.

What does this mean?

Many students already use mouth guards. If your child does not have a mouth guard, we highly recommend that you purchase one as soon as possible, especially if your son or daughter is playing hockey or rugby as their PE subject at the moment.

We do sell one type of mouth guard at the school shop, though it is worth bearing in mind that there are a wide selection available online and at all good sports retailers. It is vital that your child's mouth guard fits well and is reasonably comfortable; most retailers will offer advice on size, style and fit. You may prefer to consult other professionals; if, for example, your child is under the care of an orthodontist, it may be pertinent to seek their advice before purchase.

Children will not be prevented from participating if they do not have a mouth guard. It is, however, important that they understand that we highly recommend that mouth guards are worn for all contact sports. This is also the case for sports played during Interhall, extracurricular clubs, and all fixtures.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me at the school.

Yours Faithfully,

James Hampton
Head of P.E.

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