

29 November 2021

Dear families

Face coverings in schools

On 27 November, the Prime Minister announced new temporary measures following the emergence of the Omicron variant of COVID-19 in the UK. The new measures will be introduced as a precaution to slow down the spread of the variant while more information is gathered.

The Department for Education wrote to schools on Sunday 28 November with updated guidance regarding face coverings. As a result, I am writing to inform you that the wearing of face coverings will be compulsory from 30 November in all communal areas for all students in Years 7 and above, staff, contractors, and visitors, unless individuals are exempt from wearing a face covering.

Students

Students who are not exempt must wear face coverings in all shared communal areas. This includes corridors, when inside during break / lunchtime (other than when eating), and on any dedicated school transport and public transport.

Face coverings must not be scarves, balaclavas or bandanas and must be suitable for use within a school setting. Face coverings must fully cover the nose and mouth.

The government has not made it compulsory at this stage to wear face coverings in classrooms; however, students may choose to do so.

When not being worn, coverings should be kept in a small plastic bag, and this can be kept in a pocket or bag. Face coverings must not be left out on a desk or table at any time.

It is the responsibility of the student and their family to come to school with a face covering. If a student forgets their covering, schools will have some spare face coverings to issue to students.

Hygiene

It is vital that everyone understands the importance of keeping their face covering away from others and good hygiene practice when handling the covering.

Any touching of the face covering should be followed by sanitising or washing hands. Everyone should avoid touching the fabric of the face covering when putting face coverings on and taking them off.

Fabric face coverings should be washed every day. If wearing a disposable face covering, they should be disposed of in a plastic bag in a lidded bin.

Nobody must touch anyone else's mask without wearing disposable gloves and then thoroughly washing their hands.

Face coverings are just one way of preventing the spread of COVID-19. Thorough hand washing and the hygienic disposal of tissues continue to be of paramount importance.

We ask that everyone continues to test twice weekly using lateral flow device tests (LFD) tests.

Vaccinations

All eligible staff and students aged 12 and over may take up the vaccination offer including boosters. To book a vaccination, please visit: [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) vaccination - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)

Thank you for your continued support. We will continue to communicate as the guidance changes. If you have any questions, queries or concerns, please contact your school directly.

Yours sincerely,

Wesley Davies

Chief Executive Officer

