

Guidance to face coverings and face masks within the school environment:

V4 – created: 01/09/20, apply from: 03/09/20

CMAT will follow Government guidance. Currently, this does not recommend the use of face coverings in schools:

“Nationwide, the government is not recommending face coverings are necessary in education settings generally because a system of control, applicable to all education environments, provides additional mitigating measures.

Schools and colleges will have the discretion to require face coverings in communal areas where social distancing cannot be safely managed, if they believe that it is right in their particular circumstances.”

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-in-education/face-coverings-in-education>

For academic year 2020/21, CMAT will review and amend our guidance fortnightly. However, outside of this cycle we will respond to any significant changes to guidance or local contexts as a matter of urgency outside of this.

CMAT guidelines: From the 3/9/20:

We recognize that returning to the work environment may cause anxiety for some colleagues and young people. To be in a position to successfully welcome all young people back to school, we need our community to be confident and as content with arrangements as possible.

Face Visors

A face visor will be available from the school for all staff. This is primarily for use when moving in busy communal areas. This is particularly recommended when moving at congested periods of the school day. Staff can also wear these in staff rest areas where this makes them feel more comfortable. The member of staff is responsible for cleaning their face shield at regular intervals.

Face masks

Face masks will be allowed to be worn by members of staff in busy communal areas but they must be provided by the individual.

The Trust has purchased an initial number of visors and face masks for distribution to all schools, but all schools should purchase their own supply of face masks and visors

Teaching Staff and other colleagues working in the school environment

If a member of teaching staff wishes to wear a face covering in readjusting to the work environment, the face visor can be worn during lessons. At this time, we will not use face masks due to the impact this may have on basic communication, those who experience hearing difficulties and may also inadvertently pose wider health risks with regard to safe wearing, reduced adherence to basic control measures and safe disposal.

Student facing support staff (site, catering, SSAs, cleaning etc)

For some members of support staff whose roles involve regular, extended, close interaction with students or presence in communal areas may feel more comfortable and be safer wearing a face mask in addition to a visor. It may be appropriate in circumstances where the main control mechanisms may be regularly compromised (inability to maintain social distancing, underlying health issues etc) or when using solutions in the electrostatic fogging machine. Where this may apply, there should be an individual risk assessment and discussion with a member of SLT with support from H&S and HR teams.

Should any individual colleague wish to discuss whether they require an individual risk assessment in addition to these arrangements, please contact your line manager, senior leadership team or HR representative.

Support staff

Office-based support staff should not be working in an environment where social distancing cannot be adhered to and therefore do not require face coverings. Should any colleague who has been shielding, or may be feeling anxious about returning to work, a supportive discussion should take place. An individual risk assessment may then be carried out with their line manager and after careful consideration it may be appropriate in these individual circumstances to allow the use of a face visor during the working day, but with fortnightly review to move towards no longer wearing the covering.

Meetings should only be conducted in rooms that have the capacity to adhere to the social distancing guidelines.

Students:

Primary age students should not need to wear face masks.

As secondary students return to school, they should bring 2 face masks to school with them (to enable changing should it become damaged or damp).

Despite careful consideration and planning, it is likely that the actual movement of large numbers of students will produce issues where year groups are unable to remain apart and may then be required to wear masks. It is also important that we have the opportunity to observe the movement of year groups in their zones and to discuss whether there is a need for masks to be worn by students at these times.

Where it is deemed appropriate, this decision should be made in conjunction with the Executive Principal and Health and Safety representative. It is important that such a requirement is carefully considered and balances the protections offered with the risks apparent in the increased use of face coverings.

Students should not wear face coverings in lessons.

If any parent, particularly of a secondary age student, wishes to discuss an underlying health condition or other reason for wearing a face covering then they should contact their school to discuss further. Staff are encouraged to be sympathetic in these conversations. In keeping with the support we are providing to staff, students should also be encouraged back into school through compromise where required and justified. This should similarly follow other guidance on the separation between corridor and learning spaces. The Headteacher should sign off each individual situation, clear expectations and a review date should also be provided.

Visitors:

Visitors to the school or admin areas must be asked, prior to their visit, to bring their own face protection and this should be worn at all times. If they don't, then the site can provide a covering at the meeting holder's discretion. Schools must be clear on what areas visitors will be provided access to and how this will be controlled. Any work to be undertaken by outside contractors should be arranged out of school hours unless emergency work is required.

Any meetings should only be conducted in rooms that have the capacity to adhere to the social distancing guidelines

These other measures remain the best ways of managing risk in the workplace:

- wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser before putting a face covering on, and before and after removing it.
- continue to wash your hands regularly
- change and wash your face covering daily
- practise social distancing wherever possible
- Follow movement guidance around the corridors and move in an orderly and sensible fashion
- Sit in the patterns established in classrooms, and avoid sitting face to face
- Staff must not allow their vigilance to drop when no longer working with students

Areas of National Government Intervention:

Consistent with WHO's & Government new advice, schools and colleges should take additional precautionary measures in areas where the transmission of the virus is high. These areas are defined as [areas of national government intervention](#).

As schools start to operate at full capacity under these conditions, we will seek to learn from our peers and emerging science. We will tailor action plans to local context.

The current guidance states:

Tier 1

The default position for areas in national government intervention is that education and childcare settings will remain open. An area moving into national intervention with restrictions short of education and childcare closure is described as 'tier 1'. There are no changes to childcare, and **the only difference**

in education settings is that where pupils in year 7 and above are educated, face coverings should be worn by adults and pupils when moving around the premises, outside of classrooms, such as in corridors and communal areas where social distancing cannot easily be maintained.

All nurseries, childminders, schools, colleges and other educational establishments should remain open and continue to allow all their children and young people to attend, on site, with no other restrictions in place.

Tier 2

Early years settings, primary schools and alternative provision (AP) providers, special schools and other specialist settings will continue to allow all children/pupils to attend on site. **Secondary schools move to a rota model, combining on-site provision with remote education. They continue to allow full-time attendance on site to vulnerable children and young people and the children of critical workers. All other pupils should not attend on site except for their rota time.** Further education (FE) providers should adopt similar principles with discretion to decide on a model that limits numbers on site but works for each individual setting.

In all areas of national government intervention, education settings where pupils in year 7 and above are educated, face coverings should be worn by adults and pupils when moving around the premises, outside of classrooms, such as in corridors and communal areas where social distancing cannot easily be maintained.

Tier 3

Childcare, nurseries, primary schools, AP, special schools and other specialist settings will continue to allow all children/pupils to attend on site. Secondary schools, FE colleges and other educational establishments would allow full-time on-site provision only to vulnerable children, the children of critical workers and selected year groups (to be identified by Department for Education). Other pupils should not attend on site. Remote education to be provided for all other pupils.

In all areas of national government intervention, education settings where pupils in year 7 and above are educated, face coverings should be worn by adults and pupils when moving around the premises, outside of classrooms, such as in corridors and communal areas where social distancing cannot easily be maintained.

Tier 4

All nurseries, childminders, mainstream schools, colleges and other educational establishments allow full-time attendance on site only to our priority groups: vulnerable children and the children of critical workers. All other pupils should not attend on site. AP, special schools and other specialist settings will allow for full-time on-site attendance of all pupils. Remote education to be provided for all other pupils.

In all areas of national government intervention, education settings where pupils in year 7 and above are educated, face coverings should be worn by adults and pupils when moving around the premises, outside of classrooms, such as in corridors and communal areas where social distancing cannot easily be maintained.

Access to face coverings

It is reasonable to assume that staff and young people will now have access to face coverings due to their increasing use in wider society, and Public Health England has made available resources on how to make a simple face covering.

However, where anybody is struggling to access a face covering, or where they are unable to use their face covering due to having forgotten it or it having become soiled or unsafe, education settings should take steps to have a small contingency supply available to meet such needs.

No-one should be excluded from education on the grounds that they are not wearing a face covering.

Exemptions

Some individuals are exempt from wearing face coverings. This applies to those who:

- cannot put on, wear or remove a face covering because of a physical or mental illness or impairment or disability
- speak to or provide assistance to someone who relies on lip reading, clear sound or facial expression to communicate

The same exemptions will apply in education settings, and we would expect teachers and other staff to be sensitive to those needs.

Safe wearing and removal of face coverings

The CMAT process for removing face coverings when those who use face coverings arrive at school, and when face coverings are worn at school. This process must be communicated clearly to pupils and staff.

Safe wearing of face coverings requires cleaning of hands before and after touching – including to remove or put them on – **and the safe storage of them in individual, sealable plastic bags between use**. Where a face covering becomes damp, it should not be worn and the face covering should be replaced carefully.

Pupils must be instructed not to touch the front of their face covering during use or when removing it and they must dispose of temporary face coverings in a 'black bag' waste bin (not recycling bin) or place reusable face coverings in a plastic bag they can take home with them, and then wash their hands again before heading to their classroom.

Further guidance on face coverings:

- Safe working in education, childcare and children's social care provides (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safe-working-in-education-childcare-and-childrens-socialcare>)
- Face coverings in education settings (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-in-education/face-coverings-in-education>)

A face covering should:

- cover your nose and mouth while allowing you to breathe comfortably
- fit comfortably but securely against the side of the face
- be secured to the head with ties or ear loops
- be made of a material that you find to be comfortable and breathable, such as cotton
- ideally include at least two layers of fabric (the World Health Organisation recommends three depending on the fabric used)
- unless disposable, it should be able to be washed with other items of laundry according to fabric washing instructions and dried without causing the face covering to be damaged

When wearing a face covering you should:

- wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser before putting a face covering on
- avoid wearing on your neck or forehead
- avoid touching the part of the face covering in contact with your mouth and nose, as it could be contaminated with the virus
- change the face covering if it becomes damp or if you've touched it
- avoid taking it off and putting it back on a lot in quick succession (for example, when leaving and entering shops on a high street)

When removing a face covering:

- wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser before removing
- only handle the straps, ties or clips
- do not give it to someone else to use
- if single-use, dispose of it carefully in a residual waste bin and do not recycle
- if reusable, wash it in line with manufacturer's instructions at the highest temperature appropriate for the fabric
- wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser once removed

- if the material is washable, wash in line with manufacturer's instructions. If it's not washable, dispose of it carefully in your usual waste
- when wearing a face covering, avoid touching your face or face covering, as you could contaminate them with germs from your hands.
- change your face covering if it becomes damp or if you've touched it.