

Dear Parents and Carers,

The introduction of national restrictions last week included new guidance for schools on the wearing of face coverings.

For pupils in year 7 and above, face coverings should be worn by adults and pupils when moving around school, outside of classrooms, such as in corridors and communal areas where social distancing cannot easily be maintained.

The requirement for face coverings to be worn by pupils in year 7 and above when travelling on dedicated school transport remains unchanged.

We acknowledge that some children and young people are exempt from wearing face coverings and we expect schools to be sensitive to those needs.

Every school is working hard to continue to provide education whilst protecting the vulnerable and we are supporting them to implement the guidance from today.

Our colleagues in Worcestershire County Council are working with schools to ensure they will have a supply of face coverings for those pupils who do not currently have one and these will be available from your school.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) usually spreads by droplets from coughs, sneezes and speaking. These droplets can also be picked up from surfaces, if you touch a surface and then your face without washing your hands first. This is why social distancing, regular hand hygiene, and covering coughs and sneezes is so important in controlling the spread of the virus.

When used correctly, wearing a face covering may reduce the spread of coronavirus droplets in certain circumstances, helping to protect others.

Further information on face coverings can be found on the Government website at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own>

It is still important to recognise coronavirus symptoms such as a high temperature, a new, continuous cough, or a loss or change to sense of smell or taste. You should get a test even if you feel well and your symptoms are mild.

Anyone with one or more of these symptoms, should book a test using either nhs.uk/coronavirus or by calling 119. In Worcestershire there are plenty of appointments available, so getting your test should be quick, convenient and easy to do.

You should self-isolate as soon as you are aware of symptoms and get a test. The result of the test will determine how long you must stay at home and self-isolate. If your test is negative, you can stop self-isolating. A positive test result means you must complete a 10-day isolation period.

Our schools, pupils, staff and students have adapted well and work exceptionally hard for children and staff, rising to every challenge put in front of them, adapting to changes at home, in the community and at school. Please continue to support your school and the measure that they are taking.

Coming together and wearing a face covering and keeping to the Hands, Face, Space guidance is a vital way we can all play our part in reducing the number of cases in the county.

Yours sincerely



Sarah Wilkins

Director for Education & Early Help



Dr. Kathryn Cobain

Director for Public Health in Worcestershire

TIPS ON HOW TO USE A FACE COVERING IN SCHOOLS

A face covering should cover your mouth and nose while allowing you to breathe comfortably. When wearing a face covering, tuck away any loose ends.



Wash your hands or use hand sanitiser before putting it on, and after use



Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth at all times



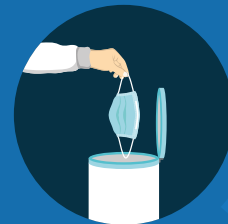
Store used face coverings in a **plastic bag** or **container** until you have an opportunity to wash them (if not single use)



Wash face coverings regularly with other laundry, using your normal detergent (if not single use)



Dispose of single use face coverings **properly**



Do NOT touch the **front of the face covering**



Do NOT touch the part of the **face covering that has been in contact with your mouth and nose**

