

28th August 2020

Dear Families,

Re: The use of face coverings in school

As promised, I am writing to update you on the use of face coverings in school. As you will be aware, the government updated its guidance on the wearing of face coverings in schools this week:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/update-on-face-coverings-in-schools>

The guidance gives Headteachers discretion over the wearing of face coverings in school. I have received over 100 e-mails from parents on this matter so I feel that I have been able to take the temperature on the community's view on this issue. Every single message, irrespective of viewpoint, was sent in the right spirit. Whatever your view, it is clear that everyone wants to do what is best not just for their own child, but the wider community.

The overwhelming majority of the responses I have received on the matter are in favour of proposals requiring face coverings in communal areas where students will come into contact with others from outside their year bubbles. Having considered a range of factors which I outlined in my previous message, I have taken the decision to go ahead with the proposal. This means that **students will need to wear face coverings during lesson changeover and instances where students need to queue with people from outside their year bubble e.g. toilet queues, waiting for transport, school buses, etc.** This policy will be in place for the first half-term although we will be regularly monitoring things in relation to developments in national guidance. We will make it clear to students where they will be required to wear face coverings on the first day back. I know that for some students there are health reasons which mean that they will need to be exempt. If this is the case, please make contact with the school via info@tytheringtonschool.co.uk to let us know. The guidance published by the government discourages the use of masks in lessons. **We will not require students to wear masks in lessons.**

Students will not have to wear any particular branding, logo or colour on their masks. Please can you ensure that your child does not wear a mask which features any politicised slogans or signs which could be deemed offensive. I have taken the decision to be flexible on mask design because it reduces the possibility of students using a mask that is not their own and it allows space for some individuality and creativity. I think in these times, this concession is important. Lastly, it is one less barrier to ensuring we get compliance.

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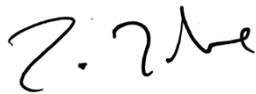
Whatever your view of this particular policy, we can all agree that in order to halt the spread of the virus, we are required to act collectively. If we all do our little bit, I believe that we can make a difference. On this matter, I would rather not have to talk about sanctions and consequences so I am appealing to everyone's better nature to ensure that we all get on board. In order for a policy of this nature to work, it requires compliance, so we will have to introduce consequences for those who persistently fail to abide by the ruling. We will outline this to students on the first day back. We are always here to listen, so please let us know in advance if you anticipate any issues with this.

I have prepared a FAQ sheet to accompany this letter which answers common themes and questions which emerged from your responses. You can also visit the "September 2020 Return to School" section on the front page of our website which sets out the measures we have taken.

I appreciate that not everyone will agree with the steps that I am implementing, however, I am doing what I feel is in the best interests of the whole community.

Many thanks for your help and support.

Kind regards



Mr Botwe

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Face Coverings FAQs

Below are answers to frequently asked questions from the many responses I received.

1) Where will my child need to wear a covering in school?

*Students will need to wear face coverings during **lesson changeover** and instances where they need to queue with people from outside their year bubble e.g. **toilet queues, waiting for transport, school buses**, etc. We will explain this clearly to students on the first day back.*

2) What will my child need?

Your child needs to come to school with:

- A **face covering**. We recommend a reusable one so that they can use it more than once.
- A **sealable bag** to keep their face covering in when they are not in use.

3) How should my child use their face covering?

We will be talking to students about how to wear masks on the first day back but if you want to get a head start, please watch [this video](#) from the World Health Organisation with your child so they know how to wear their face covering safely. The key points are:

- Their face covering needs to cover their nose and mouth when they're wearing it
- They shouldn't touch the front of the face covering or the part that's touched their mouth or nose
- They should wash their hands before and after touching the face covering, including to take it off or put it on. We are encouraging students to bring in their own hand sanitiser to help with this. There are also several sanitising stations around the school and in each classroom. They should store it in an individual, sealable plastic bag between uses
- If it becomes damp, they shouldn't wear it, and they should replace it carefully
- Single-use face coverings should be disposed of after use (**not** in a recycling bin). We will provide special bins for this. **Our preference is for students to use reusable face coverings.**

4) How often should face coverings be washed?

- Reusable face coverings will need to be washed at the end of each day, ready for your child to wear the next day
- You can wash and dry reusable face coverings with normal laundry – follow the washing instructions for the fabric and use normal detergent

5) Should my child be exempt?

Please contact us to let us know if you think there are good reasons why your child should be exempt from this policy. You can view the government's own guidance on face coverings by clicking on the following:

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<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#when-you-do-not-need-to-wear-a-face-covering>

6) What other measures are you taking to control the spread of the virus?

Please visit the “September 2020 Return to School” section on the front page of the school website for full details of the control measures we are implementing: <http://www.tytheringtonschool.co.uk>. This also contains our risk assessment and details of equipment and uniform requirements.

The main controls we are implementing to mitigate transmission are: year bubbles, enhanced cleaning around the school, sanitisers around the school site, reduction in the use of shared resources, staggering transition between lessons, year groups in designated eating areas around the school, contactless lunch ordering system, one-way corridors and pathways where possible, desk arrangements, half-year group assemblies rather than whole school assemblies. We have also slightly amended our school day. Almost all our normal calendared events for the first term will take place virtually. The local authority are encouraging students to walk or cycle to school and avoid public transport if possible.

We anticipate that the front of the school will be very busy as more families use cars to drop off their children. To reduce the possibility of an accident, please consider dropping your child off further away from school so that they walk in. This will greatly help in reducing the traffic near the school.

7) What about the use of laptops?

We anticipate that once term begins, we may have staff and students who need to be off school if they are self-isolating. This means that there will be times when we ask students to bring in a device so that they can access learning e.g. the teacher is delivering a remote lesson. We will inform your child of when this will happen and also provide locked spaces where they can leave their laptops to avoid having to carry them around school.

8) What about contactless lunch?

You will receive a message in the next few days which will give you details of how to download an app which allows you to order and pay for lunch. Please be on the lookout for this message.

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