

# The Use of Face Coverings in Primary Schools

31<sup>st</sup> August 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

We are absolutely delighted to be welcoming back all of our pupils again this week.

We have worked hard throughout the summer break (and beforehand) to ensure that we are ready for our safe full opening, including the completion of rigorous and robust Covid 19 Risk Assessments. Our Risk Assessments respond to all government guidance for schools, as well as wider research. All Risk Assessments are published on the academy websites; if you would like to talk about any element of the school return, then please do get in touch with your child's school.

We have received a number of enquiries about the use of face coverings in schools, and wanted to provide you with the most up to date information.

The government updated their 'Guidance for Full Opening: Schools' document on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> August and the full document can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>. Within this guidance, it states the following:

*'The government is not recommending universal use of face coverings in all schools...Primary school children will not need to wear a face covering...Based on current evidence and the measures that schools are already putting in place, such as the system of controls and consistent bubbles, face coverings will not be necessary in the classroom even where social distancing is not possible. Face coverings would have a negative impact on teaching and their use in the classroom should be avoided.'*

There is, therefore, no requirement for primary age pupils to wear face coverings, with the guidance advising against this. In the event of new local restrictions being imposed and changes to the advice being made we will, of course, get in touch with further information.

We are aware that some parents may still feel more comfortable sending their child to school if they are wearing a face covering. If you choose to send your child to school wearing a face covering, it will be your responsibility to teach them how to use it safely and correctly and explain to your child when you would like them to wear it; staff will be unable to support with face coverings. The government guidance on the safe use of face coverings, which your child would need to be able to adhere to independently, is as follows:

## How to wear a face covering

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

The full government guidance on the use of face coverings can be found by following this link:  
<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>.

Kindest regards

The CLIC Team and Schools