

Face Coverings Policy



Written: September 2021

Review: September 2022 or when
relevant in-line with COVID-19
guidance

Policy Statement

1. Context

From 1 September, 2021 new national advice was provided with regards to the use of face coverings by staff and pupils in some schools, and to learners in further education.

The government is not recommending face coverings are necessary in these education settings generally because a system of control, applicable to all education environments, provides additional mitigating measures. Face coverings are not recommended in Primary schools as pupils and staff are mixing in consistent groups, and because misuse may inadvertently increase the risk of transmission.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safe use and storage of face coverings to reduce the transmission of coronavirus where appropriate and to provide clarity to all stakeholders.

3. Aims

The aim of this policy is to:

- Inform good hygiene habits.
- Help to prevent the virus from spreading.
- Keep the school community safe.

4. Salford Policy on face coverings in primary schools

The use of face coverings in primary schools is generally not recommended.

The LA guidance in Salford is that schools' leaders should encourage all staff and pupils to follow the Department for Education and Public Health England advice. If, having given this advice consideration, a member of your school community wishes to wear a face covering then this should be allowed, if the person is able to use it safely.

Please remember that face coverings are an additional precaution and not a substitute for social distancing and good hygiene practice. Face coverings offer more protection to others than to the wearer. Cloth face

coverings that are reusable are as effective as the disposable versions and they are more sustainable as they generate less waste.

The school has a 'Politeness expectation' when it comes to being requested to wear face coverings. Should a member of staff request another member of staff to wear a face covering in an office or in their own place of work within the building (classroom etc), compliance with this is expected.

If a parent/carer requests their child use a face covering, ask them to try it out in a safe environment (for the length of a school day or set intervals) before they use one at school. This is for the child and their parent/carer to supervise and assess their practical use, having to take them off for breaks with hand hygiene before and after – some children may find that they are not practical for them and cannot use them for long periods of time, as well as needing several spares.

As parents/carers will not be on the premises to supervise each individual child regarding safe use and storage of face coverings, all parents, carers and the school staff should be aware that their misuse could seriously undermine the overall infection control in the school. Therefore, the school shall monitor and review the use of face coverings in school (and if needed, can require that they should or should not be worn by particular groups, child or children in consultation with their parents/carers). In choosing an age-appropriate face covering, parents should be aware of child safety risks regarding ties and loops.

Face coverings for members of staff will be subject to the individual staff member's risk assessment in the context of the school risk assessment.

Visitors to the school premises will be required to wear a face covering if they are not part of a bubble and/or they are not already wearing PPE as part of their job role.

5. How to wear a face covering safely

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 around the mouth or nose area
- avoid reusing the same face covering before it has been washed. You will need spares e.g. to wear on the journey to school, at school, and the journey back from school.

When removing a face covering you should:

- 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 share with someone else to use
- once removed they should be stored in a sealable plastic bag (like a sealable sandwich bag) and placed in a pocket or school bag/handbag after use.
- if single-use, dispose of it carefully in a residual waste bin and do not recycle (see below)
- if reusable, wash it in line with manufacturer's instructions at the highest temperature appropriate for the fabric

- once again, wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser after storing or disposing of the face covering

Disposing of face coverings into waste:

- dispose of them in your waste bin at school or a litter bin if you're outside
- take them home with you if there is no litter bin - do not drop them as litter
- Do not leave them out on desks or other surfaces
- Do not put them in a recycling bin as they cannot be recycled through conventional recycling facilities
- if you or a member of your family is self- isolating, do not come to school. When someone becomes unwell and tests positive, they should double bag all their waste e.g. tissues, disposable masks or damaged face coverings. They should store their waste for 72 hours before putting it in a 'black bag' waste bin.

6. Implementation

School need to share the policy with parents/carers if they request their child to wear a face covering.

Parents/carers need to share the face covering policy with their child and practice the safe wearing, storage and removal of the face covering prior to wearing one in school.

Pupils should be able to adhere to the face covering guidance in this policy with minimal supervision.

7. Monitoring and evaluation

Correct use of face coverings will be monitored by all staff and pupils, and misuse will be referred to the designated person.

The use of face coverings in school will be reviewed using the latest Public Health and government guidance.