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Europa School UK

Face Coverings Policy

Version and Date		Action/Notes
V1	August 2020	Following UK guidance regarding use of Face coverings in School settings and the Governing Body agreement to adopt use of Face Coverings for staff and secondary students in communal settings
V2	January 2021	Extension of the use of Masks given current evidence on the increased transmissibility of the virus, and a much higher incidence of infection in Oxfordshire than we had in September
Review Date		Review frequency: Update with latest UK government advice and in any case March 2021

The following section is extracted from UK Government advice

In the context of the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, a face covering is something which safely covers the nose and mouth. You can buy reusable or single-use face coverings.

Face coverings are not classified as PPE (personal protective equipment) which is used in a limited number of settings to protect wearers against hazards and risks, such as surgical masks or respirators used in medical and industrial settings.

Face coverings are instead largely intended to protect others, not the wearer, against the spread of infection because they cover the nose and mouth, which are the main confirmed sources of transmission of virus that causes coronavirus infection (COVID-19).

On 21 August, the World Health Organisation (WHO) updated their advice on when children over the age of 12 should wear face coverings. The WHO now advise that “children aged 12 and over should wear a mask under the same conditions as adults, in particular when they cannot guarantee at least a 1-metre distance from others and there is widespread transmission in the area”.

As a result, the UK government has revised the guidance on face coverings for staff and children in Year 7 or above in England. From 1 September new advice will apply to the use of face coverings by staff and pupils in school years 7 or above and learners in further education in England. In areas of local intervention, face coverings should be worn by adults and pupils in

secondary schools and colleges when moving around, such as in corridors and communal areas where social distancing is difficult to maintain. Nationwide, 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 is right in their particular circumstances.

Examples of where education leaders might decide to recommend the wearing of face coverings - for pupils and staff - in communal areas of the education setting include:

- where the layout of the school or college estate makes it particularly difficult to maintain social distancing when staff and pupils are moving around the premises*
- where on top of hygiene measures and the system of controls recommended in the full [opening guidance to schools](#), permitting the use of face coverings for staff, pupils or other visitors would provide additional confidence to parents to support a full return of children to school or college*

It is vital that face coverings are worn correctly and that clear instructions are provided to staff, children and young people on [how to put on, remove, store and dispose of face coverings](#) in all of the circumstances above, to avoid inadvertently increasing the risks of transmission.

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.

On the basis of current evidence, in light of the mitigating measures education settings are taking, and the negative impact on communication, face coverings will not generally be necessary in the classroom even where social distancing is not possible. There is greater use of the system of controls for minimising risk, including through keeping in small and consistent groups or bubbles, and greater scope for physical distancing by staff within classrooms. Face coverings can have a negative impact on learning and teaching and so their use in the classroom should be avoided.

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

This policy sets out the Europa School UK specific rules for the use of Face coverings in our school setting. The policy aims to balance carefully the desire to minimise virus transmission with the need to ensure an appropriate environment for children to thrive and to learn. It will be kept under review and modified as required in the light of evolving guidelines, evidence, experience and circumstances.

Staff (including supply staff)

All staff are **required** to wear a face covering in communal areas in the school where a safe 2m distance cannot be maintained from other adults or secondary students. This includes when moving around the buildings in the secondary areas of the school (Tower Block and the Secondary main building, Schuman Hall Block, Art and Music block and Sports Hall).

Secondary staff are **required** to wear a mask in the classroom if a safe 2m distance cannot be maintained from other adults or secondary students; and strongly encouraged to wear a mask in the classroom at other times where this does not undermine teaching and learning.

Primary staff are **strongly encouraged** to wear a mask in the classroom where this can be done without undermining teaching and learning – recognising that this may be more difficult in lower primary.

Staff are **required** to wear a face covering in their offices if a safe 2m distance cannot be maintained.

Staff may also consider wearing a face covering in any shared offices that allow 2m distancing but are poorly ventilated.

Where staff arrange face to face meetings, staff should consider whether face coverings are required (as above) or advisable considering the meeting environment. If a meeting can take place virtually, then this is the preferred method.

Supervisors and canteen staff must wear a face mask when serving lunches in the canteen. Face visors are optional and will be provided by the school - they must be stored in a named zip lock bag in the canteen. Visors must not be shared, and they must be cleaned after use.

Staff who supervise or deal with a suspected case of COVID-19 must wear the correct medical PPE (including face mask) and must ensure that the PPE is disposed of safely.

Single use surgical facemasks, aprons and gloves will be provided in hygiene boxes in every classroom and staff area for use by staff for first aid and dealing with ill children. The site team have PPE including face masks with filtering to address cleaning issues involving bodily fluid.

Secondary Students

Secondary Students are **required** to use a face covering on arrival and departure from school, and whilst moving about the school between classes and within the school buildings. This includes any communal settings where physical distancing cannot be maintained, such as in corridors, meeting rooms, canteen queues or at the main reception.

Once in class, students are **strongly encouraged** to continue to use face coverings in lessons. The use of face coverings in practical lessons requiring physical and vocal exertion such as Music, Physical Education and Drama will be at the discretion of the specialist teachers, but face coverings will still be encouraged during the preparation time such as use of changing rooms before and after the activity.

Primary Students

Primary students are not *required* to wear facial coverings whilst on the school site. However the school **strongly encourages** parents to provide face coverings for all primary children to be used as follows:

- on arrival and departure from school (all students)
- for use during class (encouraged in primary years 5-6, voluntary and as tolerated in primary years 3-4)

Parents and Visitors to the school

Parents and visitors to the school must wear a face covering at all times while on the school site, including during drop off and pick up.

Contractors

Contractors on the site **must** wear a face covering when moving about the site and when working within the school buildings when they cannot maintain social distancing

Building Contractors on the school site **must** adhere to the Construction Leadership Council (CLC) guidance on the use of face coverings.

<http://www.constructionleadershipcouncil.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/The-Use-of-Face-Coverings-in-Construction-during-Coronavirus.pdf>

Bus Transport to the school

Students and staff who use the school bus transport **must** use a facial covering during the journey and whilst queuing for the bus.

Provision of masks

Staff and students should wear a plain or lightly patterned face covering which is cleaned every day and carried in a zip lock bag where it can be stored safely. They are expected to bring in at least two face masks to allow for the continued use during the day. Designs should be appropriate to a school environment.

Exemptions

Some individuals may be exempt from wearing face coverings. For example, people who cannot put on, wear or remove a face covering because of a physical or mental illness or impairment, or disability, or if you are speaking to or providing assistance to someone who relies on lip reading, clear sound or facial expression to communicate. The school management will discuss individual cases and expects the school community to be sensitive to those needs.

Training

All site users should watch the YouTube video from the World Health Organisation (WHO) regarding the safe use of face masks

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Tv2BVN_WTk

Face masks must be cleaned every day. It is recommended that site users have a supply of reusable masks so that they can rotate their use to allow cleaning as well as have a reserve.

Emergency supply

The main reception holds an emergency stock of disposable face masks, but staff and students are expected to supply their own for school use.

Visors will be supplied to staff if an individual risk assessment specifies a need.

Safe Disposal of Facemasks

The school has yellow bins with lids for the disposal of single use face covering – they are situated outside the main reception and at the bus bay. These bins will be double-bagged, and the bins will be emptied regularly, and bags stored for three days after which they can be disposed using the normal waste collections. In the event of a confirmed case of Covid-19, the stored bags will be sent for special medical disposal.