

## Wearing of Face Coverings or Face Masks

### TKAT Guidance for Pupils and Staff from September 2020

*The following guidance is correct as of 15<sup>th</sup> July and may be subject to change should Government guidance change in the future.*

#### Definitions

A face mask refers to a purpose made mask that meets certain PPE criteria. They may be disposable or reusable.

A face covering refers to any material that covers the mouth and nose.

Cleaning of hands means **either washing thoroughly with soap and running water or using hand sanitiser** to cover all parts of the hands

#### General Principles

Face masks and face coverings are not recommended to be worn in school. Current Government guidance states:

**“Public Health England (PHE) does not (based on current evidence) recommend the use of face coverings in schools. This evidence will be kept under review. They are not required in schools as pupils and staff are mixing in consistent groups, and because misuse may inadvertently increase the risk of transmission.”**

If staff and pupils insist that they want to wear a face mask / face covering in school, after noting the guidance from PHE above, they should be allowed to do. In providing conditions that enable face masks to be worn in school the following PHE and DfE guidance has been followed, specifically:

[Guidance for full opening: Schools. Prevention, section 5, subsection 5, paragraph 2](#)

**Measures for arriving at and leaving school:** Schools should also have a process for removing face coverings when pupils and staff who use them arrive at school and communicate it clearly to them. Pupils must be instructed not to touch the front of their face covering during use or when removing them. They must wash their hands immediately on arrival (as is the case for all pupils), dispose of temporary face coverings in a covered bin or place reusable face coverings in a plastic bag they can take home with them, and then wash their hands again before heading to their classroom. Guidance on [safe working in education, childcare and children’s social care](#) provides more advice.

[Safe working in education, childcare and children’s social care setting, including the use of personal protective equipment. Section titled “How should PPE and face coverings be disposed of?”](#)

Used PPE and any disposable face coverings that staff, children, young people or other learners arrive wearing should be placed in a refuse bag and can be disposed of as normal domestic waste unless the wearer has symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19), in line with the [guidance on cleaning for non-healthcare settings](#).

Any homemade non-disposable face coverings that staff or children, young people or other learners are wearing when they arrive at their setting must be removed by the wearer and put in a plastic bag that the wearer has brought with them in order to take it home. The wearer must then clean their hands.

To dispose of waste from people with symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19), such as disposable cleaning cloths, tissues and PPE:

- put it in a plastic rubbish bag and tie it when full
- place the plastic bag in a second bin bag and tie it
- put it in a suitable and secure place marked for storage for 72 hours

This waste should be stored safely and securely kept away from children. You should not put your waste in communal waste areas until the waste has been stored for at least 72 hours.

Following the above PHE and DfE guidance, TKAT guidance is that pupils and staff must **‘clean’** their hands before removing or putting on face masks by **either washing hands with soap and running water or using appropriate hand sanitiser**. This will help mitigate against the risk of spread of infection from masks.

### Conditions for wearing face masks/coverings in school

- Pupils and staff **must** bring a **new disposable mask** to be worn throughout each day to ensure minimal risk of infection being brought into a school. These masks should be provided by the parent / carer. **Reusable masks and face coverings are not permitted** due to increased risk of misuse leading to increased risk of transmission
- All face masks **must** be worn properly, covering the mouth and nose
- They **must** be put on and removed properly without touching the front of the mask and stored in a sealable plastic bag (such as a sandwich bag) when not being worn (such as when eating food)
- Pupils and staff **must clean their hands thoroughly** before putting on and when removing a face mask within the school building
- The disposable face masks **must** be disposed of in the specific bins provided by the school

### Travelling to and from school

- Pupils and staff using public or school transport to school **must follow current Government guidance**. On arriving at school, they **must** remove the disposable face mask or face covering worn to travel **before** they enter the school and clean their hands. Disposable masks must be put in a designated bin and reusable masks / face coverings must be put into a sealed plastic bag where they must stay for the rest of the day. If pupils and staff wish to continue to wear a face mask during the school day, an **additional new disposable** mask will be required **provided by the parent/carers (for pupils)**. If parents / carers need financial support in providing masks for public or school transport only, they should contact their school.

### Arriving at school

- Any pupils arriving at school with a face mask or face covering **must** remove it **before** they enter the school and clean their hands. Disposable masks must be put in a designated bin and reusable masks / face coverings must be put into a sealed plastic bag where they must stay for the rest of the day. If pupils wish to continue to wear a face mask during the school day, an **additional new disposable** mask will be required **provided by the parent/carers**.

## Template letter to parents and carers

Dear Parent /Carer

I write to you with specific guidance on the wearing of face masks / coverings following recent announcements from the Government on this matter. The Government guidance for schools is based on the recommendation from Public Health England that states:

**“Public Health England (PHE) does not (based on current evidence) recommend the use of face coverings in schools. This evidence will be kept under review. They are not required in schools as pupils and staff are mixing in consistent groups, and because misuse may inadvertently increase the risk of transmission.”**

We hope that our many measures including to ‘bubble’ children in specific areas of the school, gives you confidence in your child’s return to school. If, after considering the PHE advice above, you want your child to wear a face covering in school, the following conditions apply, following Government guidance [here](#) and [here](#):

Pupils will be allowed to wear face masks in school. However, to ensure the safety of your child and other pupils the following conditions must be followed:

- Pupils **must** bring their own **new disposable mask** each day to ensure minimal risk of infection being brought into a school. **Reusable masks and face coverings are not permitted.**
- All disposable face masks **must** be worn properly, covering the mouth and nose
- They **must** be put on and removed properly without touching the front of the mask and stored in a sealable plastic bag (such as a sandwich bag) when not being worn, for example when eating food
- Pupils must **clean their hands thoroughly** before putting on and when removing a face mask within the school building, **either washing their hands or using hand sanitiser**
- The disposable face masks **must** be disposed of in the specific bins provided by the school

You will also be aware that the Government has said that children age 11 and over must wear face coverings when using public transport.

Any pupil arriving at school wearing a face mask (on public transport or otherwise) **must** remove the face mask or face covering worn for travelling **before** they enter the school and clean their hands **either by washing them or using hand sanitiser**. If they wish to continue to wear a face mask during the school day, an **additional new disposable** mask will be required, not the same face mask / covering they have arrived to school in.

We appreciate that the above conditions may be challenging for some families. If you need further support, please contact us and we will consider such requests on a case by case basis. These arrangements are based on current guidance. If there are any changes to the guidance, we will update our advice and let you know.

Yours.....

Headteacher