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Executive Principal: Ms R Hindocha
Principal: Mr I Patel

Dear Parents / Carers,

Mandatory wearing of masks in schools in Leicester

You will have heard new government advice about face coverings in schools. We wanted to let you know about how our school will approach this.

The government guidance is that “all schools in areas such as Leicester where local restrictions apply, in education settings where Year 7 and above are educated, **face coverings should be worn by adults and pupils when moving around, such as in corridors and communal areas where social distancing is difficult to maintain.** As in the general approach, **it will not usually be necessary to wear face coverings in the classroom,** where protective measures already mean the risks are lower, and they may inhibit teaching and learning.”

We have already shared with parents the significant arrangements in place in our schools to be as Covid 19 secure as is possible. This extra guidance is just therefore about the use of masks in schools. Now that **masks are mandatory in Leicester secondary schools**, parents and carers need to ensure that:

- a) your child arrives in school equipped with a **mask** alongside all their other school equipment. Please note the mask should be in school colours where possible and of a design judged appropriate by the school. Pupils must wear masks only as their face covering and not other items such as bandanas or balaclavas. We'd recommend a reusable one so that they can use it more than once, as they'll need to take it on and off during the school day. If this isn't an option, they will need to bring in several single-use face coverings each day.
- b) your child arrives in school equipped with a **sealable plastic bag** to store the mask in alongside all their other school equipment.

As this is a legal requirement, any pupils refusing to wear a mask will be internally excluded and parents / carers will be notified. Education will be provided in our internal exclusion base to reduce the risk of contamination to other students. We appreciate your support in implementing this directive from the government.

To support parents with this, we have purchased reusable masks which pupils will be given if needed on their first day at school. If after that a pupil has forgotten their mask, in exceptional circumstances, they will be provided with a disposable one for that day but parents/carers will be notified to ensure that a mask is brought to school the next day. If there is a persistent failure to bring a mask to school, pupils will be issued with consequences as detailed in point 7 below. Therefore, families will need to have a set of masks available for each child to wear a fresh one each day. Families will also need to ensure reusable masks are washed daily at an appropriate temperature. Pupils are also encouraged to bring their own small hand sanitiser bottle to support our protective measures if possible.



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Below are the details of how we will operate the mask wearing guidance in our school:

1. If pupils arrive in schools wearing a mask, this will need to be removed safely and hygienically as per school policy and instructions. If the mask is a disposable one and the pupil has others to wear during the day, the mask must be disposed of in the specially marked bin for this purpose. If the mask is a reusable one, it must be placed in a sealable plastic bag ready to be reused when next needed.
2. In classrooms, masks will not need to be worn as the guidance copied above confirms that other protective arrangements are already in place. If, however, a pupil's medical or emotional need requires them to wear a mask in classrooms, they will be permitted to do so **provided we have a letter from the parent or the child's doctor to this effect**. We are not anticipating any occasions where a pupil will need to wear a mask in a classroom as we will be supporting pupils' safety with a range of measures as detailed in our Risk Assessment for re-opening school.
3. Pupils will be required to wear masks when moving from class to class. You will know that we have limited movement so pupils remain in the same classroom as much as possible. Therefore, there will not be many occasions where this will be needed.
4. Pupils will need to wear a mask when moving outside for breaktime or lunchtime but they can then remove it once they are outside as transmission risks are significantly lower outside, however, they must maintain a social distance of 2m as much as possible.
5. Pupils will need to wear a mask when moving to any indoor lunch / breaktime areas and when queuing to purchase food indoors but then obviously remove it when eating. If food is purchased in any outdoor areas, there will be no need to wear a mask.
6. Overleaf, you will find government guidance on the safe wearing of masks. Please go through this with your child at home as they must follow these guidelines when putting on a mask, when wearing a mask and when removing a mask. Staff will go over these rules with pupils and pupils will be expected to follow these guidelines in school and take responsibility for the safe use of their mask following the guidance provided.
7. If masks are misused, there is a danger that they aid the transition of viruses. Therefore, if pupils deliberately misuse masks, they will be issued with consequences in line with our school behaviour policy, including detentions and the possibility of fixed term exclusions if conduct is persistently dangerous in the wearing of masks.
8. If your child is medically exempt from wearing a mask, please let us know by providing a note from your doctor or other similar evidence. This can be done by contacting the Assistant Head of Year or school office.

We are really looking forward to seeing our all our pupils again. As you know, we have followed all the government guidance about the safe re-opening of schools and have a thorough risk assessment in place. This extra layer of protective measures in the correct wearing of masks will further ensure the safety of staff and pupils.

Yours sincerely,



Imtiaz Patel
Principal

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

Coronavirus: How to wear a mask

How do masks work?



Masks **help reduce** droplets containing the virus released when you **breathe, speak** or **cough**

...and may also lower the chance of droplets entering through your mouth and nose, **if worn correctly**

Best types of mask...



Of homemade masks, **100% cotton masks** block the most viral particles*



Wool/knitted masks **do not work** as gaps are too large



Surgical masks provide greater protection, but **our NHS and care home staff need these**

How to wear a mask correctly



wash hands



place clean mask over mouth and nose



do not remove:
-to talk to people
-to cough/sneeze



do not touch the mask
until you are ready to remove it at home

To remove your mask...



wash hands



remove by the straps



bin or wash at above 60°C



wash hands

Remember...

Follow
Public Health England
World Health Organization
guidelines at all times

You still need to
keep 2m apart

If you wear gloves don't touch your face or mask
wash your hands **before** and **after** removal and **before** removing your mask

