



UPDATED ON FRIDAY 23 OCTOBER 2020:

Parent and Student information about face coverings at St Margaret Ward Catholic Academy

All the most recent information about face coverings in education can be found at the following place: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-in-education/face-coverings-in-education>

The most recent guidance, which was updated on 16 October 2020 states the following:

- Nationwide, the government is not recommending face coverings are necessary in education settings generally because a system of controls, applicable to all education environments, provides additional mitigating measures.
- When an area moves to the local COVID alert level 'high' or 'very high', in education settings where Year 7 students and above are educated, face coverings should be worn by adults (staff and visitors) and students when moving around indoors, such as in corridors and communal areas where social distancing is more challenging to maintain.
- 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.
- When an area moves to the local COVID alert level 'high' or 'very high', schools and colleges will need to communicate quickly and clearly to staff, parents, pupils and learners that the new arrangements require the use of face coverings in certain circumstances.

Our area has now been placed into a Tier 2 COVID alert level, which is 'high'.

What does this mean for my child and all adults in the school community?

- All students from Year 7 upwards and staff, including visitors, **must** wear a face covering when moving around indoors.
- This means in corridors and communal areas, where social distancing is more difficult to maintain.
- This includes inside communal areas at break and lunchtimes AND areas outside under the new canopy areas, where students meet and gather at break and lunchtime.
- This includes when students line up for example, when they arrive at school in the morning, after breaktime and after lunchtime and in all emergency evacuation procedures.

Details about Face Coverings: When to wear one, exemptions, and how to make your own can be found here: <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>

This document was last updated on the 24 September 2020.

What does this now mean for my child?

As from Monday 2 November, we fully expect all students from Year 7 upwards and all staff to wear a face covering in the places mentioned above.

Our Expectations:

1. Each student will need a **face covering**.
 - We would recommend a reusable one so that they can use it more than once, as they'll need to take it on and off several times during the school day.
 - If not, they will need to bring in several single-use face coverings each day.
 - Their face covering should be secured to your child's head using ear loops only.
2. All face coverings must be **plain and unbranded**.
 - Scarfs, snoods and bandanas will not be allowed.
 - We reserve the right to contact parents and ask them to change the mask if we think the style is inappropriate.
3. A **sealable plastic bag** to keep their face covering in when they're not using it.

How should my child use their face covering?

- Their face covering needs to cover their nose and mouth when they're wearing it.
- They shouldn't touch the front of the face covering or the part touching their mouth or nose.
- They should wash their hands before and after touching the face covering, including to take it off or put it on. **They should store it in an individual, sealable plastic bag between uses.**
- If it becomes damp, they shouldn't wear it, and they should replace it carefully.
- **Single-use face coverings must be disposed of in a bin after use.**

Public Health England advice on how to put on a take off a mask can be found here:

<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#exemptions>

When putting on 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

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

How often will it need to be washed?

- Reusable face coverings should be washed at the end of each day, ready for your child to wear the next day.
- You can wash and dry reusable face coverings with normal laundry – follow the washing instructions for the fabric and use normal detergent.

Access to face coverings

- It is reasonable to assume that every member of the school community will now have access to face coverings due to their increasing use in wider society, and Public Health England has made available resources on how to make a simple cloth face covering, which can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-to-wear-and-make-a-cloth-face-covering/how-to-wear-and-make-a-cloth-face-covering>
- However, where anybody is struggling to access a face covering, or where they are unable to use their face covering due to having forgotten it or it having become soiled or unsafe, we will have a small contingency supply available to meet such needs.
- No-one will be excluded from the school on the grounds that they are not wearing a face covering.

Exemptions

- Some individuals are exempt from wearing face coverings and guidance about this can be found here: <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#exemptions>

- 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 helping someone who relies on lip reading, clear sound or facial expression to communicate.

This includes (but is not limited to):

- children under the age of 11 (Public Health England does not recommend face coverings for children under the age of 3 for health and safety reasons)
- people who cannot put on, wear or remove a face covering because of a physical or mental illness or impairment, or disability
- where putting on, wearing or removing a face covering will cause you severe distress
- if you are speaking to or providing assistance to someone who relies on lip reading, clear sound or facial expressions to communicate
- to avoid harm or injury, or the risk of harm or injury, to yourself or others – including if it would negatively impact on your ability to exercise or participate in a strenuous activity
- police officers and other emergency workers, given that this may interfere with their ability to serve the public

There are also scenarios when you are permitted to remove a face covering in school:

- in order to take medication
- when attending a faith school and having lessons in a place of worship as part of your core curriculum
- if you are undertaking exercise or an activity and it would negatively impact your ability to do so

Thank you for taking the time to read this document.

HM Government

NHS

**We must
keep on protecting
each other.**

HANDS **FACE** **SPACE**

STAY ALERT • CONTROL THE VIRUS • SAVE LIVES