



Sir Graham Balfour School

Member of Sir Graham Balfour Multi-Academy Trust

Dear Parent/Carer

Face Coverings in School from 2nd September 2020

As I mentioned in my updates before the end of term, I have been keeping a very close eye on developments with regard to face coverings being worn in school. You will be aware that the Government has changed its mind now, following advice given by the World Health Organisation on young people wearing face coverings. [Face coverings in education](#)

As part of our overall strategy to try and minimise the catching and spreading of Covid-19 and thus to avoid closing down the school wholly or partially, we have decided that students and staff will be required to wear face coverings whenever they are not in class.

Here's what you and your child can expect from September 2nd, with regard to wearing a face covering when moving through shared areas at school.

When will my child need to wear a face covering at school?

Your child will need to wear a face covering at our school from when school starts in September. We've decided to introduce this measure because we feel it's appropriate to keep everyone safe at school, based on the latest guidance from the WHO and the Government as well as our observations. We feel they will add to our other strategies (Year bubbles, reducing movements, staggered breaks and lunches, hand hygiene etc etc) in helping to minimize the risk of catching and spreading Covid-19 and thus having to close the school down.

Where exactly will my child need to wear it in school?

- > They'll need to wear it when they move through shared indoor areas of the school where it's difficult to stick to social distancing. This includes corridors, the dining room when not eating, toilets, photocopier stations, visiting staff in eg Pastoral Office, Student Support Manager Office, the DAC Centre etc.
- > They **won't** need to wear it outside or in their classrooms during lessons. Please note, though, that we may include usage inside classrooms if the number of infections begins to rise locally.

What will my child need?

Your child needs to come to school with:

- > A **face covering**. We 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 this isn't an option, 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. It should not be scarf or full face covering (ie a balaclava) and obviously must not include inappropriate images or writing. Plain is best, please.
- > A **sealable plastic bag** to keep their face covering in when they're not using it so that it doesn't contaminate (or get contaminated by) other surfaces in school

Where can I get a face covering?

- > Reusable and single-use face coverings are available to buy in shops or online

- › Please click on this link to find instructions from the government on how to make a cloth face covering. [Face coverings: when to wear one and how to make your own](#)

How should my child use their face covering?

- › Watch [this video](#) from the World Health Organisation with your child so they know how to wear their face covering safely. We'll watch this in class too.
- › 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 that's touched 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 should be disposed of after use (**not** in a recycling bin)

How often will it need to be washed?

- › Reusable face coverings will need to be washed at the end of each day, ready for your child to wear the next day
- › If your child has taken a spare reusable mask from school, this will also need to be washed before they use it again
- › You can wash and dry reusable face coverings with normal laundry – follow the washing instructions for the fabric and use normal detergent

What if my child is exempt from wearing a face covering?

- › They won't need to wear one in school
- › Please let us know by contacting office@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk if your child [is exempt](#) so that we don't ask them to wear a face covering

What about my younger child?

- › This guidance on wearing face coverings doesn't apply to children under the age of 11

What if my child forgets their face covering?

- › We'll regularly remind students to bring in their face covering so as not to forget it.
- › We'll have a small supply of spares available at school, but please note that we are keen to avoid spending money on these, especially when they are easy to obtain and make.
- › To be safe in the knowledge that everyone has one, please make sure your child has their own so that we can keep our supply of spares for real emergencies.

Many thanks for your support – we are really looking forward to welcoming your children safely back to school, and I will be sending home a letter on the first day, with more information for the new term.

Yours faithfully

Mrs Beck
Headteacher

