

Wednesday 16th September 2020

Dear parents/carers

Face coverings/masks

Since the start of the academic year, we have advised that for all members of our school community, the wearing of a face covering/mask is voluntary, as the school is not located within an area designated as requiring specific local restriction measures.

However, over the last week, as the practicalities of reopening are managed, the upward trend in the infection rate nationally and locally is being reported on and it has become very evident that the availability of testing is limited, we have reviewed and updated our policy.

Our new policy on face coverings/masks which takes effect from **Thursday 17th September** means that for pupils and members of staff:

- **The wearing of face coverings/masks in communal areas as pupils move around the school site, is mandatory at all times.** This is due to the fact that at times during the day, the layout of the school makes it difficult to maintain social distancing. This includes queuing for food at break and lunchtime.
- **The wearing of face coverings/masks on public/school transport to and from the school site remains mandatory.**
- The wearing of face coverings/masks in classrooms remains voluntary at this time. This is to reduce any anxiety that a pupil or teacher may feel during the course of a lesson.
- Face coverings do not need to be worn when outside.

I am also very aware that a small minority of pupils MAY be exempt from the wearing of face coverings/masks due to medical reasons. If you believe that your child may fall into this category, please do contact your child's Head of Year directly and once the exemption is agreed, your child will be issued with a card which can be shown as required.

The safe wearing and removal of face coverings/masks will be extremely important in maintaining the effectiveness of wearing them. Pupils will be taught how to do this with key messages being:

- Hands should be cleaned/sanitised before putting the covering/mask on and after it has been taken off.
- Coverings and masks should be stored in an individual sealable plastic bag.
- Pupils should not touch the front of their face covering/mask during use or when removing it.

Wey Valley Academy

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We would ask that masks which are no longer able to be worn are returned home for disposal. Pupils should NOT simply place it in a general bin.

I remain grateful for your support in ensuring the suitability of face coverings bought to be worn in school. As a reminder, these must be plain or a simple pattern in design, they can be any colour and ideally the reusable cloth style coverings as these are more environmentally friendly. If the face covering has any large logos, pictures or is considered inappropriate for school by the Senior Leadership Team, the face covering will have to be removed and we will provide a new surgical style mask as a temporary replacement. Scarfs, Snoods, Buffs and Bandanas are not permitted to be worn as face coverings.

Should a child forget to bring their face covering/mask on a school day or it has become soiled or unsafe, we do have a small contingency supply available. It would therefore be advisable for your child to keep a spare face covering/mask if possible.

I will continue to keep you updated about any further changes to our policy.

Yours faithfully



Robert Russell
Principal

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