

The STAR Multi-Academy Trust

Use of face coverings – updated May 2021

(to be implemented from Monday 7th June as Selby area had previously been following alternative advice from North Yorkshire Public Health due to local high Covid-19 prevalence. This local response is no longer required)

The May 2021 update of Schools Coronavirus (Covid-19) Operational Guidance for schools gave updated guidance with regard the wearing of face coverings on school sites states:

Based on the current state of the pandemic and the positive progress being made, it is no longer necessary to recommend the additional precautionary face covering measures put in place from the 8 March. From 17 May, in line with Step 3 of the roadmap, face coverings will no longer be recommended for pupils in classrooms or communal areas in all schools. Face coverings will also no longer be recommended for staff in classrooms. In all schools we continue to recommend that face coverings should be worn by staff and visitors in situations outside of classrooms where social distancing is not possible (for example, when moving around in corridors and communal areas).

The reintroduction of face coverings for pupils, students or staff may be advised for a temporary period in response to particular localised outbreaks, including variants of concern. In all cases, any educational drawbacks should be balanced with the benefits of managing transmission. The Local Action Committee structure (bronze/silver/gold) should be used in such circumstances to re-introduce the use of face coverings. Immediate outbreak response (at the level of individual settings or a cluster of settings) remains for local directors of public health to advise on.

Children and young people aged 11 and over must still wear a face covering on public transport. In accordance with advice from PHE, they must also wear a face covering when travelling on dedicated transport to secondary school or college. This does not apply to children and young people who are exempt from wearing face coverings.

Face coverings and masks within the STAR MAT – updated position from 7th June 2021:

Our Trust sites have had a Face Coverings Policy in place since late September 2020. We thank our students, staff and parental community for their continued support in adhering to this policy and helping to safeguard everyone involved.

The following changes to DfE Policy will be fully instigated across all Trust sites from 7th June 2021.

Secondary Students: *it is no longer be recommended for students to wear face coverings apart from those using school transport. However, we recognise that some students may take some time to adjust to this change or wish to wear a face covering. School staff will work sensitively with students and will generally support this decision where no issues arise.*

Primary Pupils: *In concurrence with national guidance that face coverings should not be worn by children under 12 years, we do not recommend face coverings be used by our primary aged pupils. However, we recognise that some families may request for their child to wear face coverings whilst on the school site. There may be a variety of background reasons for this for example underlying health conditions, anxiety, SEND (including OCD and ASD related infection anxiety). At all times, where a family make such a request, it will be taken seriously and a timely discussion with an appropriate member of staff facilitated. The discussion will be documented in a brief individual risk assessment, and if agreed that a face covering is appropriate, this will be permitted with immediate effect and reviewed at approximately monthly intervals.*

In all case the local school team will remain the arbiter of what is deemed an acceptable face covering and will work with your child to ensure they understand the rules with regard where they may be removed, safe disposal and so on.

Visitors and Staff: **Our Trust policy remains that face-coverings should be worn by adults in all communal areas as identified by the individual school. This applies to staff and visitors, apart from those who are exempt.**

Visitors to STAR MAT buildings:

School offices will, to all effect, remain closed to ad-hoc/casual visitors during the school day. However, we are delighted that we are now able to look to book on-site appointments where it is more appropriate for discussion to take place in person. Such appointments must be planned in advance such as appropriate Covi-19 secure control procedures can be followed for everyone's wellbeing.

All visitors to STAR MAT sites (including Trust Central employees) will be required to wear face coverings (unless they are exempt from wearing one) as they enter school entrance areas to sign in and then to pass through communal spaces. Under express permission of the Headteacher, certain visitors may be allowed to remove face coverings once social distancing measures are in place.

Parents and Carers on site:

It is recognised that drop-off and collection at some of our sites, whilst carefully planned, may be a point of risk for transmission for example 'school gates' in primary schools. To help protect the entire school community, parents and carers are asked to minimise the number of collecting adults. Alongside this, all adults bringing/collecting from the school site are required to wear face coverings through points of flow unless exempt.

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