



Face Coverings in WGGS – update November 2021

What is the current school policy regarding face coverings?

All pupils and staff are required to wear a face covering that covers their mouth and nose to provide an additional layer of protection. A face covering must be:

1. Worn correctly the entire time on site (see diagram).
2. Worn in public spaces such as corridors, food areas, and so on.
3. Worn in classrooms and in all circumstances where distances of more than 2 meters cannot be maintained. The exception in lessons when or if exercise or strenuous activity is involved.
4. It must be removed if instructed by a member of staff.
5. It must be plain (for pupils), replaced every 4 hours and taken home for disposal or replacement.
6. Face visors or shields should not be worn as an alternative to face coverings.

Will the policy change?

The policy may change and this will be dependent on the following factors:

- Updated guidance from the DfE or Herts Public Health England
- A member of teaching staff is judged to be at high risk and a risk assessment concludes that all pupils and staff wearing a mask will provide sufficient protection to allow for the teacher to remain in school.

The level of enforcement will reflect the local and national conditions, this will vary from:

- Voluntary – at the discretion of the individual
- Advised – encouraged
- Expected – required; individuals may apply for an exemption.
- Compulsory and enforced – failure to wear a mask, without a school issued exemption that is clearly displayed may be sanctioned.

The areas in which a face covering must also be worn may also differ, from all people on site to be required to wear them:

- In all indoor communal areas, such as corridors, reception, food areas etc.
- In all indoor areas, including classrooms
- Throughout the school site

If the school does need to make a change in policy then the pupils will receive instructions on how to wear the mask, when to wear it and how to dispose of them. The behaviour policy will also be changed to enforce compliance, although pupils with specific medical conditions can be exempt.

DfE guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-in-education/face-coverings-in-education>

Can a person receive an exemption from wearing a face covering?

The school will follow the [government guidelines](#) that states exemption can be granted for the following reasons:

1. people who cannot put on, wear or remove a face covering because of a physical or mental illness or impairment, or disability
2. where putting on, wearing or removing a face covering will cause severe distress
3. if you are speaking to or providing assistance to someone who relies on lip reading, clear sound or facial expressions to communicate. (Staff only)



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If a parent wishes their daughter to be exempt from wearing a face covering they should make a request to the following:

Reason 1 contact the medical team on medical@watfordgirls.herts.sch.uk

Reason 2 contact the relevant Director of Key Stage

j.shrimpton@watfordgirls.herts.sch.uk Key Stage 3

s.cowling@watfordgirls.herts.sch.uk Key Stage 4

c.bevan@watfordgirls.herts.sch.uk Key Stage 5

If permission is granted then your daughter will receive an exception card that should be displayed behind her ID badge on her lanyard.

Staff should make requests to the Head.

Why are pupils required to remove face coverings practical lessons?

In places or during activities when wearing a face covering will “risk of harm or injury, to the person or others - including if it would negatively impact on the ability to exercise or participate in a strenuous activity” then it is not appropriate. Heads of Departments of subjects in which these activities take place may decide if face coverings are appropriate in their area.

Which face covering should pupils wear?

The covering should be plain and cover their mouth and nose. 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 several times during the school day. If this isn’t an option, they’ll need to bring in several single-use face coverings each day. Their face covering should be secured to their head or around the back of the head in an appropriate way. Reusable and single-use face coverings are available to buy in shops or online. Here are [instructions](#) from the government on how to make a cloth face covering.

Pupils should also carry 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.

Reusable face coverings will need to be washed before being worn again. You can wash and dry reusable face coverings with normal laundry – follow the washing instructions for the fabric and use normal detergent

How should the face covering be worn?

All students will be shown [this video](#) from the World Health Organisation they know how to wear their face covering safely.

- 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)

Not following these guidelines can make the transfer of the virus more likely.