



28th August 2020

Dear parents and carers,

Re: Face coverings in school

Earlier this week, The Government announced new guidance about pupils in secondary schools wearing face coverings.

The Department for Education has now released guidance on this. The guidance varies depending on whether the local area is under restrictions or 'local lockdown'. Birmingham is not currently under these restrictions so we are able to apply the more flexible version of the guidance.

At DEC you will see from the website (www.decschool.co.uk/reopening) and the return to school video (<https://bit.ly/2ExtS5a>), we have put an extensive system of controls into place to make it safe for pupils and staff to return. The new guidance on face coverings simply adds to our system of controls.

How will DEC operate under the guidance for face coverings in school?

Our approach will be as follows, from the first day of term:

- Face coverings will be encouraged for pupils in corridors and indoor social spaces where maintaining social distancing is more difficult. Staff will provide guidance to pupils throughout their induction to the autumn term. Our guidance and approach may be adapted as the term begins and we will ensure pupils are briefed at all times.
- In line with the current guidance, face coverings will not need to be worn when pupils are outdoors but pupils are free to do so should they wish to. Pupils with medical or special educational needs may be exempt from wearing face coverings – we will support exemption for these pupils. If you think your child is exempt from wearing a face covering please contact us via enquiry@decschool.co.uk and we can take account of this in our plans.
- In line with the current guidance, face coverings will not need to be worn when pupils are in lessons. Whilst most pupils will not wear them in lessons, pupils with medical needs where they have been recommended to wear a face coverings in lessons will be allowed to do so. If you think your child will need to wear a face covering in lessons, please contact us via enquiry@decschool.co.uk and we can take account of this in our plans.
- Assemblies will be broadcast to pupil's form rooms via video link to avoid large groups being together in an assembly. However, if a face to face assembly is needed, we will allow pupils to wear face coverings should they wish to.
- Pupils must continue to wear face coverings on public transport.



**Will my child be punished if they do not wear a face covering?**

No. Under the guidance, we will not enforce face coverings being worn but we will encourage it at times of the day outlined above such as lesson change over. Our principle will be to apply common sense; ensuring pupils act responsibly and maturely at all times.

Does my child need to have their own face covering?

Yes. If your child is going to be wearing a face covering, they need to have their own reusable one. We will provide every pupil with a re-sealable plastic bag in which to store their face covering when not in use. If a pupil forgets theirs, we will provide a disposable replacement for the day.

Will pupils be trained how to use theirs safely at school?

Yes. We have published this guidance, and a helpful video on safe face covering usage on our website: www.decschool.co.uk/face-coverings-2. We will also go through this with pupils as part of our induction to the autumn term.

Are there any rules about the type of covering/ patterned fabric?

No. We understand that some face coverings will have been purchased with patterns/ logos. This is generally fine. However as with any other accessory, any that are not deemed in-keeping with our professional looking uniform or display anything inappropriate will not be permitted.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to email us via enquiry@decschool.co.uk

Yours sincerely,

Mr M Dunn
Head Teacher

