

New Siblands Primary
Gillingstool
Thornbury
South Gloucestershire
BS35 2EG
Tel. 01454 866754
DfE School Number 803/7031
enquiries@newsiblands.org.uk
www.newsiblands.org.uk



New Siblands School
"Achievement, Belonging, Celebration"

Valuing every child through fostering independence,
inclusion, trust, respect and support

Headteacher: Ms Carrie Osmond

New Siblands Secondary
Easton Hill Road
Thornbury
South Gloucestershire
BS35 2JU
Tel. 01454 862888

2nd December 2020

Re: Updated guidance on face coverings

Dear Parents and Carers,

The government have published some further clarity on the use of face coverings in schools now that the latest lockdown in England has ended and a tier system has been introduced.

Please see the latest update below:

"The [World Health Organisation published a statement on 21 August about children and face coverings.](#) They now advise that "children aged 12 and over should wear a mask under the same conditions as adults, in particular when they cannot guarantee at least a 1-metre distance from others and there is widespread transmission in the area."

Nationwide, the government is not recommending face coverings are necessary in education settings generally because a system of controls, applicable to all education environments, provides additional mitigating measures. Schools and colleges will have the discretion to require face coverings in indoor communal areas where social distancing cannot be safely managed if they believe that it is right in their particular circumstances.

In primary schools where social distancing is not possible in indoor areas outside of classrooms between members of staff or visitors (for example, in staffrooms), head teachers will have the discretion to decide whether to ask staff or visitors to wear, or agree to them wearing face coverings in these circumstances. But children in primary school do not need to wear a face covering.

Safe wearing of face coverings requires cleaning of hands before and after touching – including to remove or put them on – and the safe storage of them in individual, sealable plastic bags between use. Where a face covering becomes damp, it should not be worn and the face covering should be replaced carefully.

On the basis of current evidence, in light of the mitigating measures education settings are taking, and the negative impact on communication, face coverings will not generally be necessary in the classroom even where social distancing is not possible. There is greater use of the system of controls for minimising risk, including through keeping in small and consistent groups or bubbles, and greater scope for physical distancing by staff within classrooms. Face coverings can have a negative impact on learning and teaching and so their use in the classroom should be avoided."

In light of the above guidance we are confident that our system of control measures are robust and that it is not necessary for pupils in Y7 and above to wear face coverings in corridors, where pupils may briefly pass each other at a social distance; or in communal areas. As you know the organisation of our bubbles are such that there is no sustained indoor or outdoor mixing, hand hygiene measures are in place, as is social distancing in corridors. These measures are strictly adhered to by pupils and staff.

The advice for school transport remains that pupils from Y7 upwards should wear face coverings on school transport, as they have been doing since September. If your child is in Y6 or below and has been wearing a

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face mask on school transport, they can continue to do so. It is important to note that face coverings need to be regularly washed and changed. Please provide your child with two face coverings so that they can wear a different one on alternate days and they can be washed in between.

We understand that the changes caused by entering a new period of restrictions could be a cause of anxiety for both you and your child. We will continue to keep safety at the heart of everything we do in order to reduce this. Please talk to myself or Hazel Sinclair (Deputy Head) if you have any concerns.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carrie Osmond". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.