



Office of the Director of Public Health

Health, Housing and Adult Social Care Directorate
Public Health
West Offices
Station Rise
York YO1 6GA

Date: 2 September 2020

Email: enquiries.publichealth@york.gov.uk

Dear Parent / Carer,

RE: Face Coverings in Schools

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support in the fight against the spread of coronavirus. As part of this effort the World Health Organisation (WHO) has issued new advice that children aged 12 and above should wear face coverings in schools in corridors and communal spaces in areas where social distancing is difficult to achieve. The government has subsequently changed their guidance and are now recommending that adults and children wear face coverings in communal spaces in secondary schools and higher education settings.

In York we do not currently have high numbers of cases of Covid-19 and little evidence of widespread transmission of coronavirus. But as a local authority we have a priority to get children back to school safely, so although York is managing coronavirus well at the moment we are strongly recommending that your child/children wear a face covering when returning to secondary school or higher education now. So, in line with WHO advice, we are recommending that face coverings are worn in communal areas such as corridors and on school transport but not in classrooms. Schools have already taken steps to minimise the risk of cross infection in classroom settings and it is important that face coverings do not get in the way of the learning environment.

Regular hand washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or the use of hand sanitiser when access to soap and water is difficult remain the single most important way of preventing the spread of coronavirus but face coverings have an important role to play to play in those situations when social distancing of 2 metres is difficult to achieve. All these measures can help to avoid York having to introduce local restrictions as we have seen in other areas such as Leicester.

Thank you in advance for your understanding and co-operation in our ongoing response to this changing situation. Information on face coverings can be found through the link below including details of those who can be excluded from wearing one because of their individual condition.

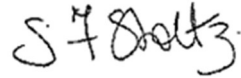
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own>

If you have any specific concerns please speak to your child's school in the first instance. For general enquiries please feel free to contact the local public health team at enquiries.publichealth@york.gov.uk or telephone 01904 553005.

Yours sincerely



Amanda Hatton
Corporate Director:
Children Education & Communities



Sharon Stoltz
Director: Public Health