



26 August 2020

Dear Parents or Carers,

Mask Wearing Guidance at Bishop Milner Catholic College

I am sorry that I am having to write you another letter following my communication to all parents earlier this week, but as I'm sure many of you will have seen and read in the news, the government has changed the stance on wearing face coverings in **certain schools and areas of lockdown**. Below I hope to answer any questions that you may have regarding face coverings at Bishop Milner Catholic College.

Please be advised that if Dudley enter a period of lockdown on the advice of the government, this guidance will change.

Q: Can my child wear an appropriate face mask / covering at college?

Our college supports the wearing of appropriate face coverings / masks where it is safe and practical to do so, particularly indoors along corridors and in social areas (when not eating). **At present, this is a personal choice for you to make with your child at college.**

In line with the current guidance, students are not required to wear face coverings in classrooms during lessons.

Please note that face masks with valves are not currently recommended in community settings.

Q: My child struggles with wearing a face covering, but I want them to wear one, what should I do?

Face coverings used **incorrectly** can accelerate transmission risks. As a parent or carer, it is important that you are confident that your child understands how to wear, put on and remove a face covering safely. The college will not monitor this during the day. You may decide that it is better that your child does not wear a face covering. If your child has any underlying medical conditions, you should discuss the wearing of masks / face coverings with your GP or specialist. Should students not adopt safe protocols, the college reserves the right to contact home and / or direct students to safely dispose of their mask.

Q: What type of face covering should I provide my child with?

Remember, face coverings are reported to be more appropriate for older children / young adults. Should they / you wish them to wear a fabric covering please refer to government guidance.

Q: Can my child wear any colours, logos etc on their face covering?

In the first instance we recommend that students who choose to wear face coverings use their common sense and wear sensible masks that are not deemed offensive by the design (Wolves and Villa masks would definitely be offensive – joking! 😊). Ideally, plain grey, black, white or pale blue fabric coverings. Face masks with valves are not currently recommended in community settings. It is important that masks are for health and safety reasons only. We have asked staff to adhere to this too.

If a student attends college with a face covering that does not conform to our ethos as a college, they will be directed to safely dispose of this immediately.

Q: Will school provide my child with a face covering?

No, the college will keep PPE available for staff caring for students with medical and complex needs. The choice to wear and buy a suitable covering for your child is your responsibility.

Q: How should a face covering be worn and removed safely?

A face covering should:

Cover your nose and mouth while allowing you to breathe comfortably.

Fit comfortably but securely against the side of the face.

Be secured to the head with ties or ear loops.

Be made of a material that you find to be comfortable and breathable, such as cotton.

Ideally include at least two layers of fabric (the World Health Organisation recommends three depending on the fabric used).

Unless disposable, it should be able to be washed with other items of laundry according to fabric washing instructions and dried without causing the face covering to be damaged.

When wearing a face covering you should:

Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser before putting a face covering on.

Avoid wearing on your neck or forehead.

Avoid touching the part of the face covering in contact with your mouth and nose, as it could be contaminated with the virus.

Change the face covering if it becomes damp or if you've touched it.

Avoid taking it off and putting it back on a lot in quick succession (for example, when leaving and entering shops on a high street).

When removing a face covering:

Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser before removing.

Only handle the straps, ties or clips.

Do not give it to someone else to use.

If single-use, dispose of it carefully in a residual waste bin and do not recycle.

If reusable, wash it in line with manufacturer's instructions at the highest temperature appropriate for the fabric.

Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser once removed.

Q: What should my child do if they want to remove their mask in school?

Ensure that your child has a safe disposable bag to place the mask in and tie, before placing in an allocated lidded bin.

Q: I do not want my child to wear a mask.

The wearing of appropriate face coverings is currently a choice for you and students to make. All staff and students respect the likelihood that some students and staff do not wish to wear a face covering whilst infection rates are low and / or cannot wear face coverings due to their specific needs.

If Dudley enter a period of lockdown then this guidance will change.

Should you require any further guidance, please refer to GOV.UK online and for any specific issues, please do not hesitate to contact the college by email in the first instance until we reopen Tuesday 1 September.

Please do not attend the school office / reception in person at this time.

Please now enjoy the final week of the summer holidays and we look forward to seeing all of the students in September.

Take care and God bless,

Mr R May



Principal