



Covid-19: ATLP Position on the use of face coverings

On the 26th August, Department for Education updated their guidance to include the latest position on the [use of face coverings in educational settings](#).

Unless schools are located in areas subject to localised intervention, the decision as to whether face coverings should be used is left to school leaders; this change to national guidance has led to this policy statement.

ATLP have already implemented a robust and rigorous risk assessment in response to the [guidance for the full opening of schools](#), issued by the Department for Education. Protective measures have been implemented in all of our schools to ensure the risk of transmission is limited.

We do, however, recognise that maintaining a safe social distance is not always natural for young people, particularly during social time such as breaks and lunchtimes. Therefore, in accordance with the advice issued by the World Health Organisation and the Department for Education, ATLP will require all secondary aged pupils to wear face coverings in communal areas. They will not be required in the canteen where other protective measures are already in place.

School timetables have already been organised to limit the amount of movement in and around school between lessons. Localised arrangements will, therefore, be in place as to when face coverings need to be worn at other times. Pupils will be directed as to these arrangements and they will be listed in individual school opening plans.

Pupils will be asked to provide their own face covering and the safe storage and wearing of masks will be covered as part of induction on the return to school.

As part of our risk assessment, staff were advised of their responsibility to maintain social distancing guidance, particularly in adult to adult contact. So long as this is maintained, there is no requirement for staff to wear masks. However, where such social distancing cannot be maintained in adult to adult contact, face coverings should be used. Given the protective measures already in place and the guidance detailed in school opening plans, this is considered to be the exception to the rule.

The wearing of face coverings is not required in lessons as this is not conducive to learning and teaching.

Some pupils may not be able to wear face coverings. Parents are strongly encouraged to ensure school leaders are aware of this.

ATLP recognises that some may feel anxious and choose to wear face coverings at other times. ATLP will not discourage this and will actively work with individuals to support them with this; this is personal choice.

With effect from 1st September 2020