

CABINET STATEMENT

# Written Statement: Update on use of face coverings in schools and colleges

**Kirsty Williams, Minister for Education**

First published: 23 November 2020

Last updated: 23 November 2020

It is vital that young people, parents and the workforce feel confident that all measures are being taken to ensure the school environment is as safe as possible.

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The Welsh Government has updated its operational guidance on the use of face coverings in schools and colleges. The move follows the publication of SAGE evidence and [a recent TAG report](#).

We have been clear that we will keep every policy under review and will continue to follow scientific advice.

The new guidance is simple to follow, easier to administer and ensures that there is a consistent policy across Wales.

The guidance now states that face coverings should be worn:

- in all areas outside the classroom by staff and learners in secondary schools and colleges
- on dedicated school and college transport for learners in year 7 and up
- by visitors to all schools and colleges, including parents and carers picking up and collecting children

Social distancing and washing hands remain the most important measures that everyone in Wales must continue to take. Wearing face coverings can complement these measures, ensuring we are doing everything we can to keep ourselves and others safe.

We have already announced funding of £2.3m to support the purchasing of face coverings in secondary schools and colleges.

Everyone in Wales has an important part to play in helping to prevent the spread of coronavirus and keep each other safe. This includes staying out of each other's homes, except in very limited circumstances, limiting how many different people we meet, maintaining social distancing and washing hands regularly.

We will be working with schools to help reinforce the messages to pupils, parents and staff on the importance of taking responsibility to help save lives and protect our NHS.

<https://gov.wales/operational-guidance-schools-and-settings-autumn-term-covid-19>

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