

Office of the Medical Officer of Health

19-21 Broad Street | St Helier
Jersey | JE2 3RR

16 November 2020

Dear parents or carer,

Mask wearing in schools and colleges for students in Years 11, 12 and 13

We are writing to you about a decision that has been made following the most recent advice from the Scientific and Technical Advisory Cell. The decision taken extends mask-wearing policy to include older school pupils in years 11, 12 and 13 in school and college settings.

From **Wednesday, 18 November**, these pupils will be advised to wear mouth and nose coverings in areas where mixing and physical distancing is more difficult to manage e.g. communal areas. Secondary school staff will also be required to wear clear face shields while teaching and visitors will be required to wear mouth and nose coverings.

Guidance

From **Wednesday, 18 November** the following guidance will apply to secondary schools as well as higher and further education settings:

Years 11, 12 and 13 and those attending further and higher education settings:

- Pupils in years 11, 12 and 13 and young people attending further and higher education should wear a mouth and nose covering when moving around in indoor areas, such as in corridors and other communal areas
- Children will not be required to wear a mouth and nose covering in the classroom at this stage

Staff and all adult visitors

- Teachers should wear a clear face shield when teaching indoors
- Teachers should wear a mouth and nose covering when moving around in indoor areas, such as in corridors and communal areas
- Other members of staff and adult visitors should wear a mouth and nose covering when moving around in indoor areas, such as in corridors and communal areas

Access to mouth and nose coverings

Young people will generally be expected to wear their own mouth and nose covering. However, if any pupils have any problems obtaining a mouth and nose covering, or where they are unable to use their mouth and nose covering due to having forgotten it or it having become soiled or unsafe, schools will have a small supply available to meet such needs.

Exemptions

Exemptions can apply if the individual (adults as well as children) has a special need, disability or condition that would make it very difficult for them to wear a mouth and nose covering.

This includes:

- If they cannot put on, wear or remove a mouth and nose covering because of a physical or mental illness or impairment, or disability
- If putting on, wearing or removing a mouth and nose covering will cause the person severe distress
- If the person is speaking to or providing assistance to someone who relies on lip-reading, clear sound or facial expressions to communicate

For example, if a child/young person has a serious respiratory condition, they may find it too difficult to breathe through a cloth mask.

If a person has a learning difficulty, sensory processing disorder or an emotional and mental health condition, wearing a mask could be too overwhelming.

If a person has communication difficulties, speech impairment or finds it hard to express themselves with a mask on, especially if they are non-verbal, a mask would be difficult.

This list is not exhaustive and there will be many other disabilities, including invisible ones, that would make wearing a mask very difficult. If wearing a cloth mask is problematic to health, causes distress or discomfort, then a clear face shield could be an alternative, which will still offer protection to others and the wearer.

Exemption cards will be available from the school for both members of staff and pupils. These can be applied through via the school office. Please contact your school if you have any questions.

Thank you very much for your support in this matter and I hope that you and your families stay well and safe.

Yours sincerely,



Senator Tracey Vallois
Minister for Education



Dr Ivan Muscat
Deputy Medical Officer of Health